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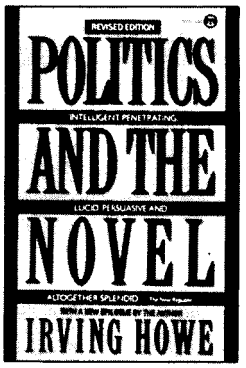
POLITICS AND THE NOVEL

By Irving Howe
With a New Epilogue



Examining "the violent intrusion of politics" upon the modern literary imagination, leading critic Irving Howe traces his theme through the works of such great novelists as Dostoevsky ("The Politics of Salvation"), Conrad ("Order and Anarchy") and Henry James ("The Political Vocation"), to Koestler ("The Twentieth Century") and Orwell ("History as Nightmare"). This masterpiece of literary criticism now contains a new essay written especially for this edition covering contemporary works—including discussion of V.S. Naipaul and Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

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We Tip Our Hats

It's a great pleasure for us to report that our biannual fund drive, just concluded, has been a success. We've raised in cash and pledges something over $82,000 and a bit more is dribbling in. At least as heartening is that the number of contributors increased notably since the previous drive of 1984.

It's good to know that there is someone—a good many "someones"—out there caring about *Dissent*. It encourages us to keep working.

There will be improvements in design and appearance. In the Fall: a special enlarged issue on New York City and urban problems. In the Winter 1988 issue: a special section dealing with preelection social and economic themes.

So—dear readers—thanks!

THE EDITORS

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David Bromwich

Contragate: the Swill of Empire

JANUARY 31, 1987

For the past twenty-two months, almost since the day of President Reagan's second inauguration, the foreign policy of the United States has been controlled by a handful of military officers and their pals: freelance spies, itinerant jobbers from think tanks, adepts of "sailing close to the wind" in the illegal export of arms. The president is not, exactly, part of this company, though nobody has ever been better at toasting them, with a wink and a nod. But it was his office, the common knowledge of his opinions, and his ignorance that provided the necessary cover for them to join together. By christening their head organizer "a national hero," he has lately endorsed the very acts he claims to have known too little to ratify at the time.

Who are these men? We have only begun to glimpse, in the half light of their hints and hesitations, the curious underground life that the Reagan administration fostered for the Norths, Poindexters, and Secords, whom it had silently raised to power. One thing is certain. It was à life of soldiers playing at government; of fledgling citizens, barely acquainted with the rules of a democracy; of sly executants and solid henchmen, whose loyalty to the Constitution was nothing beside their faith in the great man they served. But again, who were they? Gunrunners; the sponsors, or concocters of aliases, for armies of mercenaries; ex-CIA agents (but what *is* an ex-CIA agent?) and their cronies from the world of munitions and lobbying: in short, facilitators of terrorists-in-need, along with the usual foot soldiers, who turn up as drug peddlers on the return trip. They are the swill of empire. But the deals they cooked up were elaborate—the packages they assembled heavy to load and unload. It is not to be supposed that they did their secret work without many well-placed accomplices up and down the halls of State and Defense.

Americans have lived these last many months by the whims of a state within the state. Everything we seem to stand for, every commitment our leaders seem to affirm, is puzzling, questionable, recondite. The president himself is a personified *double entendre*; and he does not wait for an answer. In every picture you see, these days, he is waving goodbye.

BACK IN EARLY 1985, some of Ronald Reagan's friends came up with an idea to win a mid-term election. Get back the American hostages in Lebanon by arranging a payoff to Iran. What! Iran, the stronghold of Moslem fanaticism? Iran, whose every success we have deplored, and instructed all Europe (in terms of no uncertain moral advantage) to help us stop? No. This was another Iran, one we had almost forgotten; the Iran of geopolitical renown, the "bulwark against Soviet penetration" in the Persian Gulf. The idea, for this second Iran, was to send a few shipments of weapons—not enough to win the war, our president believed or might have believed; though, in fact, Iran may now be winning the war, thanks to the same negligible supplies. We pitched in with two thousand missile-launchers, which the president thought were hand-held until, at a press conference, a reporter informed him that they were mounted. With these, the Iranians can fire missiles that burn through the lead plating of tanks; the spare parts that we added

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give them enough to equip their air force once again. But all of it (we were told at first) "could easily fit into a single cargo plane." No taking of sides was involved.

The home of the Ayatollah Khomeini's freedom fighters bought our weapons, all the way down the line. But in another sense the Iranians were not buying: the chance to wreck one more American presidency was too perfect to resist. Besides, this time they could have their revenge on Israel into the bargain. The president's motive appears to have been a pathetic mix of sentimentality and opportunism. Israel's motive was more canny, from one point of view. It came to betting on a nation of evangelical Moslems, which is committed to the destruction of Israel, against a nation of the Arab League, which has held the same commitment for a longer time. It is difficult to conceive how this gamble could prove to be other than disastrously wrong. But in offering to help the United States, the leadership of Israel was at any rate conducting policy, however wrong the help and however imprudent the policy. By contrast, everything that our president did, at the bidding of the Colonel, the Admiral, and their friends, merely followed from an impulse of lawless glory by which all policy was answerable to the demands of fantasy and spectacle. In such a mood, a "wild idea" that would "sock it to the president's opponents" was already halfway to being realized.

It had occurred to a few people all along—people, like the current secretary of state, who do not consistently aspire to the status of outlaws—that these military deals and geopolitical rationalizations would cast a suspicious light on our anti-terrorist "line." Meanwhile, it was occurring to some even less trustful Americans that there never had been a line. We were proterrorist when it suited our aims of the moment: as witness our support for the *contras*. So why not Iran? Still, in all the administration's doings and in the shuffling quasi-legal apologetics that followed their discovery, nobody could have guessed the final turn of the story that the president's artists-in-uniform had contrived. While Iran was paying good money for the weapons we sent, it was paying bad money too, over the market value of the items purchased, to show its appreciation for the mob of geniuses at the White House. And that money went—*not* straight to the mob; for these were supply-side men. It went, instead, to our second set of terrorist friends, the *contras*.

Robert Lekachman

Glee

David Broder, the *Washington Post*'s political sage, has reproved *New Republic* editor Michael Kinsley for openly proclaiming his glee at Iragua. His fellow pundits, joined by sober-faced politicians and newspaper editorialists, fear damage to the presidency. We have heard all this before.

Bunglers and criminals in high office patriotically endeavor to put Watergate or Iragua behind them in order to govern effectively and prevent the Soviets from taking advantage of the leader of the Free World's disarray. Serving military officers do right to take the Fifth Amendment. Only yesterday, Joe McCarthy was lacerating Fifth Amendment Commies and universities were firing members of their faculties who took advantage of constitutional protection. Now George Will, possibly our highest-paid conservative, celebrates the Fifth and urges Congress to confer immunity upon North and Poindexter. It's enough to make the proverbial horse laugh.

For my part, I not only share Kinsley's glee, but I look forward with keen anticipation to the paralysis of this administration in its expiring months. Let Lawrence Walsh, the independent counsel (a.k.a. special prosecutor), assemble his staff with all deliberate speed. May their inquiries stretch into 1988. Ditto for the House and Senate select committees. By all means encourage the White House to issue more conflicting statements. Get the Hasenfus story. Interview the mysterious General Secord. Sell Reagan's teflon at auction. May each day bring new helpings of malfeasance and misfeasance.

This administration has presided over calamitous foreign policies. Its illegal *contra* war, deliberate escalation of the arms race, refusal to match the Soviet moratorium on nuclear testing, violation of the Salt II treaty, and Star Wars follies have all made the world a more dangerous place, confused our allies, and damaged our own economy. Domestically, Reaganomics has redistributed income to the already obscenely rich, broken unions, starved social programs, and tolerated persistently high unemployment. Our society is nastier now than it was in 1980.

If initiative shifts from the president and his reactionary helpers to a Democratic Congress, each of us should stand and cheer the alleged crisis of the presidency.

Let's hear it for glee!

—Democratic Left, Jan.-Feb., 1987 □

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The White House was thus paying a hefty bribe to retrieve hostages from terrorists, who could then recapture them, or others, at will. At the same time, it was chiseling a few extra dollars (thirty million, if we can trust Edwin Meese with a fact) from the first set of terrorists, for the sake of conveying them to a second set. All this it did at a moment when such payment appears to have been prohibited by the ever more freely interpretable laws of the Congress of the United States.

Let us turn from these lofty considerations to the patchwork of rumor and innuendo that confronts a reader of the daily papers. And, in particular, to the two interesting personalities at the heart of the case: our new national hero, Colonel North; and the distributor of medals who was the first to acclaim him. Americans easily confound truthfulness and generosity by supposing that together they form a compound virtue called "good nature." Truthfulness and generosity, honesty and altruism, are in fact widely different traits. Everybody has known direct, plain-spoken, even compulsively truth-telling persons without a particle of generous feeling. Likewise it is possible for an altruist—someone who is "generous to a fault"—to have only the vaguest familiarity with a great many ordinary habits of truth-telling. In imagining, and then bringing into being, a cause or a set of persons worthy of his self-sacrifice, the altruist has to be a ready believer from the first in one kind of fiction. His calling is simply to make it come true. And if he is aided by self-deception, there is no telling where he will stop. The hero, Pyle, of Graham Greene's *The Quiet American*, was modeled on this sort of person. Some foreign observers have supposed him to be an American type.

Nobody pretends that Admiral Poindexter is an inveterately honest man. He seems well versed in the arts of skulduggery and manipulation, and his management of the press, at the invasion of Grenada, was itself enough to establish his character. But what if one chose to credit the picture of Colonel North that his admirers have tried to make current: that he is an ingenuous fellow, an enthusiast of freedom, with a big streak of decency. Why should we therefore expect him to tell the truth? He *made up* the cause he served, that of the *contras*, before it had a proper existence outside his mind. He had to lie about it, or dissimulate, or redefine the truth, in order to keep it alive through its days of adversity. The ugly past of its leaders, the scrappiness of its political program, the grinding inhumanity of its guerrilla tactics: these facts had to be kept in obscurity; or, if they did come to light, they had to be placed on an infinitely adjustable schedule of reformation. Doubtless to the *contras* themselves, North has been a straight dealer, within the limits of his competence. But they were his whole economy of truth. Other truths —that civil wars are to be avoided, particularly when they are not one's own; that Iran today remains a terrorist power; that there is not, and never yet has been, anything resembling a majority popular sentiment against the Sandinistas—these were outside his province. From day to day, it was Colonel North's business to sell out all these truths, in order to keep afloat the one cause that he did care something about. For him now to say what actually happened, after the initial profession of bafflement, the shredding of documents, and the sudden siege of prudence and the Fifth Amendment, would be to begin an unfamiliar conversation. Since he first came to prominence on William Buckley's *Firing Line*, with a defense of the army after the massacre at My Lai, Colonel North has been called a "maverick," a "cowboy," a "rogue elephant." But truth is a maverick, too. It will not be hired out by anyone who pleases.

Colonel North received a medal for heroic service on the occasion of his successful wheedling in Congress to cry up votes for selling AWACS to Saudi Arabia. It was the finding of still more arms, for still another war, which, if fought, the United States would observe from the sidelines, with its customary geopolitical acumen. How many faraway deaths it takes to feed the hearty decency of this president's helper! It would seem that he is a man who lives for, and is kept healthy by, war. Yet we are told he performed none of these acts for private gain. A ruling passion like war can sometimes be its own reward, and in any case a large share of his reversion took the form of personal (not public) vanity. He was secure in his knowledge that the president loved him for what he did. But to the view of every person of sense, dishonor was written over everything he did: dishonor for the word of his country, and for the cause of constitutional democracy itself, which he was busy dismembering at home, in the dubious hope of forging a counterfeit of it some day south of the border.

As for the distributor of medals, he remains a less enigmatic, but finally a more mysterious, phenomenon. He is no stranger to dishonor. He presided over the slaughter of our marines in Lebanon, and then withdrew without a whisper. James Watt and Michael Deaver sat at the places he set for them. These memories belong to his life without having joined his reputation. Has there ever before

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been a public figure to whom people felt so kindly disposed, whose record of public kindness was such an absolute zero as his? When, in the mid-1940s, Americans said that they loved Roosevelt, they had in view an impression of selfless activity that they could read in the lines of his face; there was also perhaps the impression that he was one of the rich, who had not sold the country to the rich, but helped to widen its promise in a time of crisis. Nothing like these impressions can explain the dream of Reagan from which we are only beginning to awake. This awakening is unprecedented in our history—never, before, was there such a sleep—and it will be painful. He has bequeathed to us a confusing legacy of debts and corruption, with a vacant air of good feeling. Whatever emerges from the scandal of Iran and Nicaragua, it will be recorded of Ronald Reagan that he was a spellbinder, who enchanted his countrymen when they could least afford that luxury, but whose charm may have ended in time to repair some of the things he almost destroyed. He was, and is, the ultimate front man.

Irving Howe

Reagangate: the Farce and the Shame

You need—said Oscar Wilde about the death of Dickens's Little Nell—a heart of stone not to laugh. So too about Irangate, contragate, Reagangate.

A cake decorated with a key delivered by hand to the Iranians; a Bible with a verse inscribed by Ron; two international finaglers named Ghorbanifar and Khashoggi accepted as diplomatic authorities; droppings of cant from Washington about never negotiating with terrorists; CIA operators trying to blame NSC operators, while Robert McFarlane blames the Israelis (they gave him bad intelligence and he, poor innocent, believed them); Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams, that silky charmer, hustling ten million bucks from the Sultan of Brunei for the *contras* and then blithely chirping that he doesn't know what happened to the dough; George Shultz saying he doesn't know what happened; Don Regan saying he too—all this is the stuff of farce.

This bumbling, lawless, arrogant, stupid, vicious sequence of inanities and pratfalls isn't happening in Lower Slobovia; it's happening in the administration of the most powerful capital of the world, one of the two that can—by decision or, as it now appears, lack of decision—blow up the world.

I apologize to the Three Stooges who, in the last *Dissent*, I ineptly compared to Ollie, Ellie, and Donnie. At least if the Three Stooges had taken a cake to Iran, they'd have thrown it in Khomeini's face.

Farce, yes, but also a deeply serious matter, far more so than Watergate. To compare Watergate with contragate is like comparing a crew of housebreakers with a network of international gunrunners. For what Iran/contragate signified was a sustained effort, largely successful and perhaps still in place, to set up an illegal shadow government—what Theodore Draper has called a junta—staffed by influential people within the White House and by a ring of retired army officers, ex-(or still?) CIA men, free-lance adventurers, and thugs.

A comparison: In the Moscow Trials engineered during the 1930s by Stalin against fallen Bolsheviks, one charge was that the defendants had set up a "parallel center," a sort of shadow to the government. Given Stalin's terror and the way his intraparty opponents had been broken, the charge was a cruel mockery. But now, in our democratic United States, something quite like that—a "parallel center"—was set up by North, Poindexter, and various parties still to be named, some surely in high places. The "parallel center" or junta, taking as its historic mission to wipe out communism in *very* weak countries, found illegal ways to chan-

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nel money to the *contras*. (But would the Three Stooges have lost the Sultan's ten million dollars?) Whatever the original purpose of the Iran feeler—if it even had a clear purpose—it soon became a strategem for circumventing the decision of Congress and the will of the American people.

Yet what was unique about this right-wing "parallel center" in Washington was not that it set itself up in opposition to the government. No, it was set up *by* the government and could not have survived a day without the tacit connivance of high government officials. The government remade itself as an anti-government.

A One-Act Play

SCENE FROM A ONE-ACT PLAY: Donnie, Ollie, Ellie, and Ronnie, the main characters. Ollie and Ellie may be hard to tell apart but remember that Ollie is the National Hero.

Ollie: Mr. President, my Commander in Chief *(Ronnie's face reddens with pleasure)*, those congressmen are a bunch of yellow-bellied pacifists, liberals, pinkos; they don't realize we're in a deadly war with communism and that you can't play by the rules because the communists don't either.... Mr. President, there's a crisis: the freedom fighters are short of money....

Ellie: I think I can raise some from the Sultan of Brunei.

Ronnie: Sultan? Only Sultan I know is the Sultan of Swat, Babe Ruth, remember him? *(Ronnie swings like a home-run hitter, loud appreciative laughter)* Where in hell is Brunei?

Ellie: (hesitantly) I'm not sure, maybe I could call Norman....

Donnie: (aside) Why doesn't he shut up, who let him in anyway?

Ollie: (patiently) Mr. President, I address you as my Commander in Chief *(face reddens again, etc., etc.)* and have to say that we may find it necessary to take some unusual steps, maybe cutting a corner or two....

Ronnie: (interrupting, in his Commander-in-Chief voice) Don't say another word, Colonel. You know, I'm a Big Idea man myself and don't need to get involved in all those details. I expect you to do your duty.

PEOPLE ASK: DID THE PRESIDENT KNOW? What can they possibly mean by that? What sort of epistemological maze do they want to lead us into?

Well, perhaps it's unfair just to dismiss the

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The Crowd in American Literature

NICOLAUS MILLS

"This is a most excellent piece of work—a genuinely original, possibly mind-changing contribution to American literary history."—R. W. B. Lewis

In *The Crowd in American Literature,* Nicolaus Mills focuses on the role the crowd has played in American prose from the time of the Revolution to the Great Depression of the 1930s. He shows that the questions raised by American novelists in their depictions of the crowd go to the heart of American life. The crowd, according to Mills, becomes a "critical lens" that enables us to comprehend more fully the dimensions of society, sources of power within society, and the "clarity of the inarticulate."
Illustrated

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question. So *Dissent* is assembling a panel of experts—Descartes, Hume, and Wittgenstein—to investigate the problem: Do we know what we mean when we ask, did Reagan know?

Every crisis brings its cant, and the reigning cant of this moment—spread by writers like David Broder and Charles Krauthammer—is that we ought not to rejoice at the collapse of the Reaganite deception, since after all this administration has almost two years to go and we can't afford to have it paralyzed. (*But why? Given all it's done, might not a touch of paralysis constitute a measure of health?*) At a more exalted level Charles Krauthammer opines in the *New Republic* that there may well be, heavy sigh, a conflict between democracy and the needs of an American empire, and all this fuss about a few little blunders by Ollie and His Merry Boys could well undermine the presidency. The presidency needs to be protected, hence go easy on the president.

Who has been the main enemy of the presidency? Who has either consciously disgraced it or allowed his subordinates to violate the law while he slumbered peacefully, if not the president?

One may wonder whether in fact there is any such thing as the presidency—isn't that a fiction of political scientists, authors of textbooks, and journalists who would like someday to be political scientists? There is, we know, a sequence of presidents, some better, some worse. And then, there's something else: the simple truth. First, let that come out and then we'll take a look at the presidency.

IT'S FINALLY FALLING APART, the whole Reaganite deception, the great scam, the reactionary politics. What a sorry mess—from breaking the air controllers' union to the preposterous Grenada invasion, from James Watt at Interior to McFarlane in Teheran, from supply-side economics to the biggest budget deficit in American history, from steadily falling standards of living for the working class to repeated tax breaks for the rich, from utter indifference to the plight of the blacks to—but why go on? It's falling apart, the Teflon falseness and greed and mindlessness.

And now? A little liberalism, maybe? A touch of decency and human concern?

Joanne Barkan

A Cheer for the Constitution

It's 1987. We're celebrating the two hundredth anniversary of the drafting of the Constitution, and the Reagan administration has done much to make the occasion relevant. With a fine sense of timing, it's gone public with the notion that the executive branch of the government is above the law.

Political pundits aren't putting much emphasis on the constitutional connection. We're more likely to hear about "the dangers of crippling the presidency." (If we push this investigation too far, we'll do permanent damage to an office that's already been weakened.) We also hear a lot about "getting on with important business." (We'll paralyze the government if this crisis isn't cut short.)

But what about permanent damage to the Constitution? And the issue of democracy? It's disturbing to see how small a portion of the media coverage of Contragate is devoted to the question of democratic government.

It's disturbing but not surprising. Those who argue the save-the-presidency and the let's-get-on-with-business lines actually have other concerns. The Republicans don't want the messy scandal to spill into the upcoming electoral season. The Democrats worry about being blamed for harassing a popular president. They also worry about being blamed for "losing Central America to the Communists." They seem to be wrestling with any number of backlash nightmares.

Then there are the conservatives in both parties who hope to limit the crisis and thereby salvage the *substance* of the administration's foreign policy.

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They would have the president acknowledge his little slip-up with the law, apologize in one of his shuffle-and-shucks routines, and then back to business as usual.

Finally, there are the foreign pundits and government officials abroad who go on at great length about American naïveté, puritan morality, and our immature propensity to self-flagellation. If we Americans were a bit older and wiser, we'd know that all governments engage in these *petites* improprieties. You can't stop the march of world history just because someone has violated a few little laws.

So when does a law become big enough to bother about? Where do we draw the line, saying that beyond this limit even a president must obey?

Obviously, no line can be drawn dividing the mandatory from the optional. In taking the oath of office, the president swears to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution, and this includes executing the laws of the land. Unless the populace continues to see these obligations as inviolable and unless we can count on the constitutional separation of powers to provide a mechanism for investigating and prosecuting the abuse of power, government by law is jeopardized, and our democracy is undermined.

No sensible person claims that the Constitution is a perfect document. It's easy enough to argue that it's a bourgeois charter focused on property rights, a charter whose drafters included slaveholders. Some critics would scrap the document altogether. They see it as a sorry anachronism and believe that what we really need is a constitutional convention that would start from scratch.

In preparation for this year's anniversary, a committee of some three hundred government and party officials, labor leaders, lawyers, and scholars undertook a five-year study of the Constitution. The committee issued its report in January and recommended some substantial changes, one of which would allow members of Congress to serve in the Cabinet and in other positions in the executive branch. Supporters of the proposal claim that it wouldn't affect the separation of powers *too much*. (Imagine the current investigations getting under way with several high-ranking senators also serving in the State and Defense Departments.)

It's doubtful that anything will come of this recommendation. But in mid-Contragate season, even the *thought* of tampering with the separation of powers can send a chill up the spine of a democrat. There's only a small arsenal of weapons available for the intermittent struggle against the imperial presidency. Not much more than a vigilant press, public sentiment, and the separation of powers stands between democratic government and the abuses of an administration that places itself above the law. So whatever guarantees do exist must be carefully safeguarded, and the best way to go about that is to push forward the toughest investigation possible.

Two nagging questions remain. The first has to do with the focus of the Contragate investigation. Even if the various counsel and committees ferret out every violation of the law, is it possible that the content of Reagan's foreign policy could remain intact? Could we end up with technically legal versions of the same miserably immoral policies?

We could. Nothing in the Constitution prohibits the president or Congress from supporting murderous dictatorships around the world or exploiting the economies of destitute nations.

Replacing immoral policies with democratic and humane ones is the task of citizens and mass movements and public opinion—all those forces in society that put pressure on officials and policy shapers. The conclusion is straightforward. The malfeasance of the Reagan administration should be prosecuted to the fullest, but there's much to be done beyond Contragate.

The second question is more difficult to answer. Why did it take so long for the president's policies to create a scandal? The illegal mining of Nicaragua's harbors and illegal funding for the *contras* preceded the revelation of arms sales to Iran, *and these policies were no secret*. Why is the furor so belated?

There are several possible explanations. Perhaps winning a majority in the 1986 Senate elections boosted Democratic confidence. Perhaps the media went after this story more aggressively because they felt duped by the administration's line of no arms to Iran and no negotiations with terrorists.

Or maybe the administration simply went too far. A certain number of illegal policies—even when combined with record-breaking levels of arrogance and incompetence—may still be "within bounds." But beyond that . . . . Finally, it's possible that there was enough passive acceptance of the "Reagan doctrine" to allow the administration to carry on as it pleased in Central America. But the same anticommunist rationale did not apply in Iran, and so the scam exploded.

We know there should have been a major upheaval before now. And we're not sure we can count on this one being investigated to the fullest. The Democrats and Republicans will have more on

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their minds in the coming months than upholding the Constitution; the public could lose interest in the scandal or begin to feel that Mr. Nice Guy in the White House is getting a bum rap; or the media could decide that Contragate doesn't sell enough advertising time.

For the moment, however, the investigation is rolling along, and every day brings new revelations of the lawless dealings of an ignominious presidency. There's even a chance that during the course of the investigations, the assumptions underlying Reagan's foreign policy will come into the debate. The imperfect mechanism that's meant to uncover the scoundrels and their misdeeds seems to be working.

So Happy Anniversary, old Constitution.

Thomas Byrne Edsall

And Now, the Political Consequences?

LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

Sorting out the likely political consequences of the Iran-*contra* scandal is a difficult process. The scandal comes at a time when American politics have become exceptionally fluid, with the Democrats just beginning to regain their voice and the Republicans weakened by the results of the 1986 election. Among those active in the political process, the controversy has produced a complex mixture of responses: a combination of indignation and delight on the left; dismay and anger on the right; and some confusion among both Republican and Democratic party loyalists. The scandal may give the Democrats the White House and continued control of both branches of Congress after the 1988 election, although neither is by any means guaranteed. In fact, it is the prospect that the Iran-*contra* debate could result in a Democratic victory in 1988 that is most likely to prevent such a Democratic victory from occurring.

Watergate in the 1970s proved to be of enormous short-term benefit to the Democratic Party, and a disaster in the long term. From 1973 to 1976, Democrats gained fifty House seats, six Senate seats, and the presidency. All these advantages, however, proved paper thin by 1980 for a party that had used Watergate as a way of postponing the search for amelioration both of internal racial tensions and of working- and lower-middle-class anger over increasing tax burdens. In a larger context, Watergate may well have been a chance event in the political process serving primarily to stall a national shift to the right, a shift evident in the elections of 1968 and 1972, and then postponed to 1980 and 1984.

At the moment, the Democratic party does not appear likely to fall again into the Watergate trap. Instead of postponing consideration of questions of direct concern to the voters, party officials are giving serious thought to such issues as trade, competitiveness, and arms control. Although it lags behind the GOP in terms of campaign finance and political technology, the gap is no longer a decisive factor. In addition, a new generation of strategists who came of political age in the 1960s and early 1970s has begun to emerge in the rank of Democratic consultants and pollsters—Harrison Hickman, Robert Shrum, William Carrick, and Paul Maslin, to name just a few. In the last election, these strategists demonstrated that they are equal to the new generation of GOP consultants who have emerged in the Reagan years.

In this context, the Iran-*contra* scandal becomes part of a much larger competition between the two parties and their candidates. Some of the consequences of the scandal within that competition are:

- The Reagan administration has lost the power to

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set the national agenda. This power has been on the wane since 1981, but even in the post-election period of 1985-86, Reagan succeeded in maintaining control over the tax reform debate, won continued funding of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI, or Star Wars), and persuaded Congress to give the *contras* $100 million. At the moment, both the trade and competitiveness issues have been forced onto the agenda by Democrats, and, to the extent that Congress continues support of SDI or the contras, it will be based more on political decisions by congressional Democrats than on the muscle of the Reagan administration.

• The conservative movement is suffering significant setbacks as a result of congressional investigations of the Iran-*contra* deal, investigations that are almost sure to place under the light of adverse publicity the network of rich right-wingers who have been channeling money to the *contras* through tax-exempt foundations and other conduits. A number of these activists and contributors have their roots in the John Birch Society and assorted far-right groups, and the focus of attention on the extremity of their views will damage the domestic conservative movement.

• The scandal has been a decisive factor in a significant resurgence of support for the Democratic party. *Washington Post*-ABC poll data show a gain in the percentage of voters who identify themselves as Democrats, and, more important, the Democrats as of January 1987 had a clear advantage over the GOP on the question "Which party is better equipped to handle the problems of the country?"—for the first time since the end of the 1981–1982 recession. The Iran-*contra* scandal is not, however, at the moment a realigning issue, and the damage to the GOP is likely to continue only as long as the scandal dominates the front pages. One way that the controversy could become part of a realignment favoring the Democrats would be for the electorate to perceive Republican willingness to take a long-shot gamble on arms-to-Iran as part of a larger, and more broadly dangerous, Republican recklessness and incompetence. If, for example, the economy were to go sour, and if such economic deterioration were to be publicly linked to the deficit, it would offer the Democrats an opportunity to decry Republican irresponsibility in general.

• The presidential candidate most likely to be damaged by the scandal is George Bush. He and his staff were either active participants or knowledgeable observers both in the Iran venture and many of the activities surrounding aid to the *contras*. A central claim of the Bush campaign concerns his executive skill and expertise in foreign policy. Bush's role has yet to be fully disclosed, but to date the facts serve only to undermine confidence in his authority.

• In the competition for the GOP nomination, a beneficiary has been former Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole (R–Kans.). In early polls Dole was the only candidate to make significant inroads on Bush's lead. Through February Representative Jack Kemp (R–N.Y.) was unable to budge from the 5 to 8 percentage point range in polls of Republicans. His campaign strategy is premised on gaining substantial support from conservatives to form the base of his challenge to Bush; but, if the conservative movement is weakened by the scandal, this strategy may continue to falter.

• For Democrats, damage done to the foreign policy credibility of the Republican party by the scandal has made it easier to force issues of arms control to the top of the agenda. This is already apparent in the debate over the impact of Star Wars on the ABM treaty, a debate in which there is a strong base of agreement among ideologically diverse Democrats.

For all the Democratic candidates, however, the far more important question is whether as individuals, and together as a party, they can regain credibility on economic issues, credibility that was lost during the Carter-Reagan years.

What makes analysis of the consequences of the Iran-*contra* scandal particularly tentative, however, is the fact that the country appears to be at an unsettled political stage. The rightward drive has lost much of its momentum, but there is no resurgence of the left or of liberalism. Both parties have reached rough parity in the electorate, and continued support for spending on education, health, and Social Security is balanced by continued aversion to tax increases. The Democrats have become more willing to maintain spending for the military while the Republicans are talking more of "compassion" and concern for the elderly. Compounding this political stasis is the failure of any candidate of either party to become a focal point for the coalescence of ideology and interests characteristic of Democratic party leadership at its high points and of Republican party leadership during the initial days of the Reagan administration. Instead, the short-term prospect appears to be a kind of trench warfare between the two parties and their candidates, in which the Iran-*contra* scandal is part of the struggle, but, for the moment, not decisive. □

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Kathleen Foster/IMPACT VISUALS

A search for photographs that evoke the culture and conditions of recent immigrants to New York.

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Photographs will be accepted for four competitive categories: *Individual Work by Professional Photographer*; *Individual Work by Nonprofessional Photographer*; *Photo-Essay by Professional Photographer*; and *Photo-Essay by Nonprofessional Photographer.*

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For further information: call (718) 403-1049 or write *New Immigrants Photo Contest*, University Honors Program, Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus, University Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11201

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Murray Hausknecht

Wall Street Greed: Insiders & Outsiders

Greed was once more the occasion for moralistic comment in the wake of last fall's Ivan Boesky affair. *Newsweek* led its December 1 story with a quote from a Boesky commencement address at the University of California's School of Business Administration that situated greed in the culture of narcissism: "You can be greedy and still feel good about yourself." The magazine also reported an anti-Semitic undercurrent to the jokes going the rounds of Wall Street. This was probably inspired by the news that Boesky, a well-publicized contributor to Jewish philanthropies, received confidential information from Dennis Levine, another broker who had himself been indicted a few weeks earlier for insider trading.

Meanwhile Myron Magnet was worrying in the December 8 issue of *Fortune* whether "with investment banking now manned largely by the young, is the erosion of ethics here an early warning of imminent trouble elsewhere in business as this generation rises to power?" The problem seems to be that because "investment banking has become so competitive, so dependent on innovation, it has had to open itself to talent more than in the past, when a genteel oligarchy manned it." These new young people "often lack . . . the ethic that belongs not to the business but to the class that once ran it," and the schools they attended did not help them "acquire a strong sense of responsibility for their actions." The lack of responsibility goes along with a perspective that "takes the idea of the free market and turns an economic theory into a personal moral code;" an ethic that "turns into social Darwinism, and an appropriate tough-mindedness becomes mere hardness."

An earnest reader of these ruminations could easily conclude that if only the "genteel oligarchy" had not relaxed its vigilance and let a greedy *nouveau* element through its gates, Wall Street would not face its present embarrassments. There would be no need for the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), described, with a touch of class-conscious poetry in the *New York Times* by an anonymous money manager, as sitting "at a metal desk thinking everyone with a wood desk is guilty of something."

THIS LONGING FOR A CLASS-BASED ethic is mere nostalgia for something that never existed. Consider, for example, another part of the banking forest that presumably has not been overrun by young people of doubtful antecedents. Before deregulation in the early 1980s, banking was a highly profitable business. "We had a near monopoly," Walter Wriston, the retired chairman of Citicorp, told Robert A. Bennett of the *Times*, "and it was lovely. . . ." When the monopoly ended the bankers saw, in Bennett's words, "a Darwinian battle for survival" in the hustle and bustle of a new, relatively open market. The hustle became so fierce that at one point the Federal Reserve "proposed guidelines for fuller disclosures in bank advertising" but backed off when the banks protested. The latter got around existing state consumer protection laws and high state taxes by moving their operations to "South Dakota and Delaware in return for lower taxes and considerably less restrictive consumer protection regulations." Asked if this was ethical one banker answered, "Obviously we've got to operate in an environment conducive to enhancing our profitability. I don't see anything unethical or untoward about that." Neither did Wriston, who sounded less defensive about the morality of Citicorp moving its credit card business

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from New York to South Dakota: "Don't we have a moral obligation to our shareholders? It was not only legal, but moral."

If the sense of responsibility actually does exist, it does not extend much further than "enhancing profitability" for shareholders. A week before last Christmas AT&T reached out with a fine Dickensian touch and announced that over 27,000 jobs would be eliminated in 1987. The announcement "surprised and angered" union leaders who said "they had been assured by AT&T that the planned layoffs would be spread out over the next decade and not all occur in 1987." (*New York Times*, December 19, 1986.) The union leaders no doubt received the sympathy of a business school dean who is also a private investor and who complained to *Fortune*'s Magnet, "I can't do transactions on the telephone anymore because people do not keep their word."

There is more than a little hypocrisy and bad faith at work here. Ethical conduct involves moral choices in relationships with others, but the complaints focus only on one set of others. When the others are consumers of banking services, then hustling them with deceptive advertising is not unethical conduct. Nor does the question of ethics arise in the case of employees. Only when the "victims" of Boesky and other insider traders were fellow speculators were there cries of moral outrage. To be sure, using knowledge gained in confidence for one's own personal gain is a species of sharp practice, given the ordinary standards of morality. By these same standards, though, deceptive advertising, moving operations to circumvent consumer protection laws, or suddenly closing plants without notification or regard to the effects on workers and their communities could also be considered sharp practice. It makes more sense to say the young investment bankers have more insight and fewer illusions about the values animating the market than do its would-be apologists.

If much attention was paid to the age of the inside traders and, more discreetly, their ethnicity, no one saw any reason to comment on the absence of women and blacks from their ranks. Their very absence—like Sherlock Holmes's observation that the dog did not bark in the night—is suggestive: the youth and ethnicity of the offenders may not be wholly accidental.

Obviously one reason there were no blacks and women among the inside traders is that the number of blacks and women occupying positions giving them access to valuable information is minuscule; sexism and racism limit opportunities for white-collar crime. On the other hand, Jews have made it into those positions, and when traditional barriers weaken, new opportunities are created for both legitimate and illegitimate careers. But insider trading on the scale of a Boesky or Levine requires networks of informants, and their formation is in

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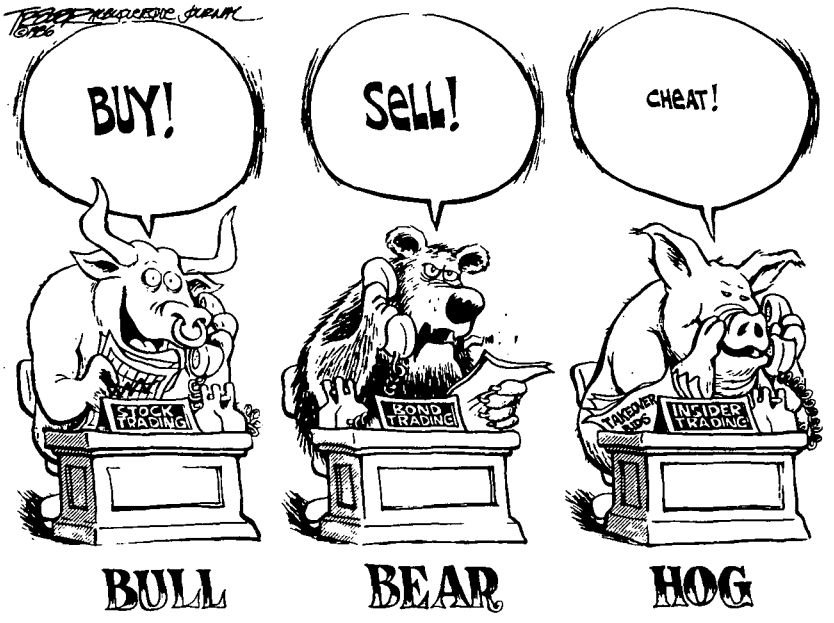

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some measure a consequence of the entrance of new people into established positions.

In a classic essay on "Dilemmas and Contradictions of Status," written over forty years ago, when women and minorities were true rarities in many professions, Everett C. Hughes observed that among colleagues there is a continual "exchange of confidences" about superiors, subordinates, clients, and the public at large, as well as expressions of cynicism and doubt about their own profession and themselves. The exchanges depend upon a mutual trust that they will not be misunderstood and that nothing will be repeated "to uninitiated ears." Trust is easiest to establish and maintain when colleagues see each other as being the same kind of people sharing common sentiments.

Here, of course, class becomes important; those without the old school tie and who are not "like us" for other reasons—Jews, blacks, women—are not fully accepted. Being marginal, they do not fully share in the group's discourse on or off the job. When, for example, businessmen relax in their social clubs—the traditional haunts of "a genteel oligarchy"—their talk oils the machinery of commerce, smooths the paths of career advancement, and sometimes allows a shrewd listener to make a killing on the market. Such conversations are closed to the marginal people who, even in our relatively enlightened age, are still barred from membership in many of these sanctums. By the same token, new people in a hostile or not entirely welcoming environment find one another and establish *their own* networks based on their common fate. These relationships, like those of their established colleagues, become the basis for enterprises, legitimate and illegitimate, that require mutual trust and confidence.

THE YOUNG TOO MAY BE REGARDED as a species of new people with a common experience. They are regularly kept in their place—e.g., hospital interns, law firm associates, untenured faculty—until deemed fit to join the trusted circle of colleagues. In this respect they differ from other new people, since it is assumed that they have the capacity to "mature" and become worthy of trust—unlike blacks, women, and Jews, who are deemed inherently untrustworthy. Sometimes the isolating mechanisms break down, as when new opportunities for talented and innovative people arose in investment banking. Then the young push into established positions before their time. Such young people have a distinct advantage, since they have not yet acquired the trained incapacities of their elders and their more recent formal education equips them with the new skills required in a rapidly changing environment. They prematurely ascend to positions of influence and income, and the incongruity between their occupational status and their age makes them highly conspicuous. Because they are not supposed to be making so much money at so young an age, they easily become symbols of greed even when their behavior is unquestionably moral. Once caught in shady or illegal practices, they become even more conspicuous and their greediness seems confirmed.

New people, then—the young and Jews today and, with a little bit of luck, women and blacks tomorrow—become suitable scapegoats whose presence accounts for unethical behavior on Wall Street. Scapegoating assures us that sharp practices and illegal behavior are simply matters of individual moral failings or the unfortunate characteristics of alien groups. In focusing on the greed of young people and those of dubious social origins, what is overlooked is that greed may well be rooted in institutions of the market rather than in failings of individual morality; that there may be no real difference between "enhancing profitability" and "greed"; and that the lack of "a sense of respon-

Strange Company

Last September the Moonies held a "lavishly-funded, four-day conference on the benign subject of 'Media Responsibility Under the First Amendment.'" So writes Eric Alterman in the October 27, 1986 *New Republic*. "Some conservatives," continues Alterman, "appear ready to go the distance with Moon. While carefully disavowing his theology, they maintain that his efforts are altruistic ones, dedicated as he claims, to furthering democracy and world peace." Midge Decter, a neoconservative writer and editor who chaired a panel on terrorism at the conference, insisted that "Moon would not sponsor, at great cost to himself, a conference such as this merely to make himself respectable. The purpose of the sponsorship by the Reverend Moon of conferences and publications and many other things is to further freedom."

May we now expect a study of Moon theology in *Commentary* and a description in the *New Criterion* of the Moonie struggle against cultural decadence? □

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sibility" may be instrinsic to the functioning of the capitalist market. Finding a scapegoat reassures those committed to existing institutions that, fundamentally, all is still well with their world. The rest of us must make do with the very small mercy that the present political and social climate has not yet completely eliminated those who sit at metal desks suspiciously watching those at wood desks.□

Joseph Clark

China: A Specter Is Haunting Communism

It's almost as though an "iron law" operates in all the communist countries, varied though they are. They seem haunted by the specter of democracy, especially when they seek to reform their moribund economies. Their economic growth and individual well-being are held back by the fetters of ancient dogmas, such as highly centralized command economies, lack of material incentives, and curbs on individual initiative and choice. Comes the promise of democracy and freedom, which usually accompanies reform, and it runs into a Great Wall, euphemistically called "the leading role of the Party." A crackdown ensues, as has happened time and again in the Soviet Union and China. These two giants seem to be jockeying for position in a race that features many starts toward reform and relaxation of authoritarian controls, and then ends up with jittery but stern reactions of an alarmed dictatorship.

At this writing Chinese Communism is in the "crackdown" phase of the cycle. Perhaps, though, the current crackdown in China is different from those that have gone before. And perhaps in Russia Gorbachev will be more successful than Khrushchev in maintaining the momentum of reform and relaxation, but not removal, of the dictatorship. When they come pouring out of the camps and prisons and psychiatric institutions, when dissent becomes normal and not a crime, when people can choose to stay or to leave, hopes will indeed be raised. When Nikolai Bukharin is rehabilitated and at least some of the guilty prosecuted, we'll know a really profound change has occurred.

Curiously, a good part of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in Russia, sponsored by Lenin in the early 1920s and championed by Bukharin, has been instituted in China under Deng Xiaoping. The Chinese peasants got back the land they tilled; small private enterprise was encouraged in cities and villages; some freedom was granted to the arts and sciences; foreign investment and greater trade and intercourse with the capitalist world were promoted. These reforms are remarkably similar to those urged by Bukharin in Russia more than sixty years ago, when he went so far as to tell the Russian peasants to "enrich themselves." For such heresies Bukharin lost his life.

Twenty years ago in China when Mao Tse-tung called upon "a hundred flowers to bloom" and when Chinese intellectuals obeyed his encouraging appeal for diversity, they suffered terrible retribution just weeks later. But the sequence of events in the period of reform instituted by Deng Xiaoping seems quite different, despite the disappointing crackdown on the Chinese students and intellectuals. There is little likelihood of a mad reaction such as Mao's "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution." The removal of party General Secretary Hu Yaobang, protégé of Deng and supporter of economic reform and extension of liberty, was a sign of how serious the crackdown was. But when Hu continued as a member of the Politburo, observers were struck by the contrast with previous purges. Premier Zhao Ziyang, at least temporarily in the general secretary post, promised a Chinese New Year gathering there would be no large-scale purge, that the economic reforms would continue. He went a bit further:

> The Chinese Communist party has not only proposed and led the economic structural reform, but also set forward, at an appropriate time, the task of political structural reform. Many people have been concerned about elections, and this year, election methods at the county level will be further improved,

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including nominating more candidates for election than required for each post.

No great democratic transformation is signaled by such a modest reform. But there is every indication that the Chinese Communist leadership is steering clear of anything resembling Mao Tse-tung's madness. The "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" was "great" only in the sense that it cut a tremendous swath into the body of China. It was not proletarian since its main activists were bands of "Red Guard" school youths wandering around the country terrorizing, first the universities and then party headquarters. When proletarians did participate, as in Shanghai, they fought back against the Red Guards who tried to "storm" the factories; in many cases the Shanghai workers managed to throw the Red Guards out of the factories. Cultural it certainly was not, since its targets were both the ancient and the new in Chinese culture, with many priceless objects of art destroyed. If anything, it was a counterrevolution.

It was no accident, as the Communists might say, that the universities were a primary target of Mao's effort to make a *permanent* revolution. There's a long tradition that feeds into the demonstrations that swept China's universities this past December. Sun Yat-sen, who became the leader of the revolution that overthrew the monarchy in 1911, was a long-time student who had almost all his credits for a medical degree. When the monarchy lost Heaven's mandate in 1911 it was students and soldiers who were the driving force of the revolution. "Students and soldiers had organized a succession of revolutionary study societies in Hupei, the better to plot a rising."[1]

The revolution that finally swept China after World War II had its origins in the May 4th movement named for demonstrations in 1919 by Peking students protesting the Japanese seizure of Shantung province. The demonstration on May 4, 1919, at the Gate of Heavenly Peace was followed by the organization of a student union to fight for China's national emancipation. In his brilliant study of the Chinese Communist revolution, Benjamin I. Schwartz describes the May 4th movement when "the fires of nationalism smoldering among China's student elements finally burst into flame."[2]

The two founders of the Chinese Communist party, Li Ta-chao and Ch'en Tu-hsiu, were professors at Peking University, Ch'en the head of the literature department and Li in philosophy. Another who became a founder was a student from Hunan, Mao Tse-tung, who organized a study group in Changsha in March 1919. Professors Ch'en and Li, the latter Mao's inspiration, carried a host of students into the revolutionary movement as reconstructed by Marxism-Leninism. Chinese students abroad, such as Chou En-lai in Paris, returned to participate in this new aspect of the Chinese revolution. Even before the party was founded at a congress of twelve men in Shanghai, Ch'en and Li had hailed the Russian Bolshevik revolution. Just a short time after the Bolsheviks took power, Li greeted "The Victory of Bolshevism," proclaiming: "Henceforth all national boundaries, all differences of classes, all barriers to freedom will be swept away." It took only the advice of the emissary from Moscow, Gregory Voitinsky, who arrived in June 1920, to organize the first Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in July 1921.

It may be difficult to discern latter-day Chinese Communism in the doctrines that Li Ta-chao and Ch'en Tu-hsiu espoused in the early days. There were Western intellectuals who did exercise some influence when they May 4th movement was spreading. These included Bertrand Russell from England and John Dewey from the U.S. who came to China for extended periods of teaching and lecturing. But they faced an obvious disadvantage—the history of Western imperialism in the Far East. Finally, when the Paris peace conference endorsed self-determination of nations in 1919 the Chinese discovered that this did not include their vast country. The obvious advantage that the Communist International had in China over social democracy is that the Comintern put the national independence struggles at the heart of the battles being fought in the Far East. Professor Ch'en started in politics as an advocate of democracy and science; with a nationalist revolution sweeping China's students and soldiers (and finally its peasants) he moved rapidly to bolshevism.

The enormous student demonstrations that spread through China this past December were in many ways a logical outcome of the reforms enacted since the death of Mao. At least as much, the student demonstrations have behind them a long and vital indigenous tradition, going back to Chinese nationalism early in this century and then both expressed through and manipulated by the early Chinese Communist movement. Observers have noted that despite the isolation of China from the rest of the world, intellectuals and many students managed to acquire a remarkable fund of information and knowledge both of history and what was

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happening in the world. There has, for example, been considerable interest in doctrines that many thought were superseded after communism conquered China. Democracy is outstanding among these doctrines that have acquired new meaning for Chinese students and intellectuals. "Democracy's Wall" became a symbol of the widespread concern and demand for democracy in the unadulterated Lincolnesque sense of the word. Perhaps the clearest statement of this outlook was expressed by the Portuguese Socialist leader, Mário Soares. Asked whether he favored "bourgeois" or "socialist" democracy, Soares replied: "There is democracy, period. It is of the people, for the people, and by the people, and it is not the dictatorship of the proletariat."

The students of the May 4th movement and the demonstrators at Heavenly Square and the creators of "Democracy's Wall" in China have just that view of democracy. In many ways it is the most revolutionary doctrine in the world today. It suffered a setback in China after the suppression of "Democracy's Wall," and again this past January when the Chinese students were barred from further demonstrations. It may be a long, long time before democracy in that sense prevails in China or in any communist country. But recent history suggests it remains the wave of the future. □

Notes

[1] John K. Fairbank, Edwin O. Reischauer, Albert M. Craig, *East Asia—Tradition and Transformation* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1978).

[2] Benjamin I. Schwartz, *Chinese Communism and the Rise of Mao* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951).

Vincente Navarro

The Unhealth of Our Medical Sector

The U.S. health care non-system is inhuman and inefficient. Among major Western industrialized nations only the U.S. and South Africa do not uphold the principle that health is a human right. The major political and medical establishments say we have neither the resources nor the popular will to make the commitment to health a human right. Both arguments are wrong.

The problem is clearly not lack of resources. What this argument ignores is that we already spend more on health care than any other nation on earth. Nearly 11 percent of our GNP is spent on health services, making the health sector the third largest economic activity in the nation.

In spite of these enormous expenditures, we still have problems with our health care system, problems unmatched by any other country in the West: wrong priorities, high costs, and poor health care. Some examples:

- From 1980 to 1985, more U.S. children died because of poverty, hunger, and malnutrition than the total number of American battle deaths in the Vietnam War.
- Today one child dies of poverty, hunger, and malnutrition on average every fifty minutes.
- A child from a black or white low-income family has only half the chance of surviving the first year of life as a child from a higher income family.
- A migrant farm worker is likely to live slightly more than one-half the number of years that a corporate executive lives.
- On average, a worker is killed or dies because of work-related conditions every five minutes.
- Three million families were refused medical care in 1985 because they could not pay for it.
- Thirty-eight million people do not have any form of health insurance coverage, public or private; 36 percent of them are children.
- Fifty-nine percent of poor and near-poor blacks and 63 percent of Hispanics were uninsured for all or part of the year in 1984.

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• Twenty years after the establishment of Medicare (the insurance program for the elderly) senior citizens still have to pay on average 22 percent of their health care bills out of their own pockets.

These are but a few examples of an unacceptable reality. The political and medical establishments ignore this reality or put it aside as a problem of certain small sectors of the population. But the problems of high cost of health care and limited health coverage of the poor are the exacerbated forms of problems faced by the majority of the U.S. population. Health costs are the major cause of personal bankruptcy. These are not only minority problems—they are majority problems.

MOST OF THESE PROBLEMS ARE PREVENTABLE. Other countries offer more comprehensive and universal health care coverage and have better health indicators and more popular health services than ours, and cost much less than ours do. Great Britain, for example, with 5.6 percent of its GNP spent on health services, offers comprehensive and universal health coverage, with 85 percent of the British people pleased with their National Health Service. A somewhat similar situation exists in Canada. In the U.S., we spend almost double (10.8 percent of the GNP) what Great Britain does, but still 16 percent of our population doesn't have any form of health coverage and the majority of our citizens still pay directly for large amounts of their health bills. Not surprisingly, 72 percent of our population feel that the U.S. health care system needs profound changes. And 62 percent favor a national health program, even if the establishment of this program would call for higher taxes (which it would not).

Why This Situation?

THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM IS THE PROFIT orientation of our health care system, the economic rationale that it sustains it, the entrenched interest groups that it reproduces, and the enormous waste that it generates. In 1983, the profit in some areas of the health sector was as follows: for the drug industry, $5.6 billion; for medical and equipment suppliers, $1.8 billion; for insurance and other financial institutions, $2.1 billion, and for health institutions (including hospitals), $2.8 billion.

But the problem is not only profits. It also includes the enormous apparatus needed to sustain those profits and the interest groups they benefit. In 1983, for example, $15.6 billion were spent on insurance overhead, $26.9 billion on hospital administration, $4.1 billion on nursing home administration, $31.1 billion on physicians' overhead, $2 billion on marketing, and $38.2 billion on excessive physicians' income.

A lot of profit and obscenely high salaries are being made from sick people. The greedy are indeed exploiting the needy. Much of these profits and expenditures is both unnecessary and harmful.

The interest groups that benefit from such greed and waste will oppose changes. And their political influence is enormous. The current Republican administration is crowded with individuals who worked for and were part of these interest groups. Starting from the top: President Reagan used to work for General Electric—a major hospital supplier—appearing in ads opposing Medicare, the program that has been responsible for a decline of 2 percent per year in the mortality rate among our senior citizens. Vice-President Bush used to be a director of Lilly, one of the largest and most profitable drug and medical equipment companies. It is not only the interest groups of the military-industrial complex that rule this federal administration, but the interests of the medical-industrial complex.

Under the Current Administration

THE HEALTH SITUATION HAS WORSENED DURING the Reagan administration. For instance:

• Infant mortality is no longer declining at the rate it had for the last twenty years. And the mortality rate of infants between 28 days and one year of age has increased.

• The gaps between black and white infant mortality rates and between low-income and high-income families are the largest since 1940.

• The number of people who do not have health coverage has increased from 1982 to 1984 by five million.

• The number of families who have been refused health care because they could not pay has increased from 1982 to 1985 by two million.

• The average out-of-pocket expenditures for the average American have increased.

• Federal health expenditures have suffered unprecedented cuts. For example, Medicare, which represents 7 percent of all federal health expenditures, has received 12 percent of all federal cuts. The percentage of federal expenditures going to the care of the elderly and disabled has declined from 7.6 to 7.1 percent while the percentage for defense has increased from 22 to 26 percent.

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- Federal interventions have stimulated hospitals to discharge unprofitable cases. The National Opinion Research Center reports that 78 percent of admitting physicians report that they have received pressure from their hospitals to discharge patients.
- There has been further growth of investor-owned hospitals (the hospitals with the highest profits), stimulated by new forms of federal payment; 13 percent of all hospitals are now investor-owned. They provide care that is believed by a majority of physicians (including a quarter of those working for them) to be inferior to care by nonprofit hospitals.
- Profits for the hospital industry have increased: 81 percent of hospitals realized profits in 1985, with an average profit margin of 14.12 percent, a margin several times higher than the 3.3 percent after tax margins reported by *Business Week* for the services industry as a whole.

Principles of a National Health Program

THE SOLUTION IS TO REVERSE the current situation that favors the greedy few over the many needy. This reversal has to be based on a popular mobilization stimulated by calls not only to compassion but also to solidarity and concern for social justice. The solution has to be rooted in a substantial change in national priorities, with a large shift of resources from the military to the health sector. As Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. said once, "A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social benefit is approaching spiritual death." We need to reverse this trend. While Reagan plans to build 17,000 new nuclear weapons over this decade at an estimated cost of $71 billion, his budget only allows for a single month's stockpile of vaccination serum. Meanwhile half of all black preschool children are not immunized against diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, and polio! We need to establish a national health program.

(1) A national health program should be based on general revenues coming from income taxes rather than fees, premiums, and payroll taxes. The reason: fairness and solidarity. The current system relies heavily on payroll taxes, fees, premiums, and direct payments—all highly regressive. Moreover, when health benefits are paid by payroll funds, the size of those benefits may hinder the competitiveness of U.S. industry. Six hundred dollars for each car in Detroit is traceable to negotiated health benefits. In other countries, health is a right that does not need to be bargained for and is provided by the government. The system of payment based on general revenue dollars allows for better public accountability and the transfer of funds within the federal budget.

(2) The policy priorities should be established at the level of the federal government with the states exercising a planning authority (under federal guidelines) and the local government exercising an administrative authority (also under federal guidelines).

(3) The health institutions (e.g., hospitals and nursing homes) that are funded primarily through tax funds should be governed by boards of trustees that are publicly accountable, and representative of the communities they serve. Fifty-one percent of hospital funds and 83 percent of nursing home funds are already tax funds, but the boards of trustees—the top authority in each institution—are highly unrepresentative of the population they serve. There is a perverse quota system in which the trustees come only from the top 5 percent (in income) of our population.

(4) A major change is needed in the orientation of the health system with priorities shifted to give greater emphasis to preventive, community, environmental, and occupational and social care. This shifting of priorities will require a combination of government interventions with popular participation in which the populations affected by the health programs should play a major role in their governance. Just one example: occupational medicine. This branch of medicine is primarily controlled by management rather than labor. Most occupational doctors are paid by management, and their work shows it. We need to give a major voice to the workers and their unions in the governance of their occupational health services. Workers pay far more attention to their health and safety than bosses do.

THE MAJOR POLITICAL AND MEDICAL ESTABLISHMENTS oppose a national health program on the grounds that it goes against the current political mood in the country. Many liberals have abandoned their commitment to a national health program because of what is presented as an antigovernment mood in the country. Because of this reading of the popular mood the Democratic Party Platform in 1984

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abandoned the party's commitment to a national health program. This is reprehensible. A basic and principled commitment cannot be abandoned because of political expediency.

The reasons for supporting a national health program are fairly straightforward: (1) it is the moral and principled thing to do—the U.S. has to join the rest of the civilized nations and recognize that health is a human right; (2) it makes sense; and (3) people want it. As simple as that. □

Marc Baldwin

Disastrous Job Losses in Michigan

DETROIT

It was expected that General Motors would announce plant closings. But when the announcement came last November, the scale was astounding: 29,000 workers in 11 plants laid off. Almost two-thirds of the affected unionized workers (17,450) live in Michigan. As many as 87,000 Michigan jobs could be lost when the ripples spread through the state economy.

Three Michigan cities bear most of the burden:

- Flint: 3,230 unemployed auto workers by the end of 1987
  3,450 truck and bus workers by August 1987
- Pontiac: 1,270 auto workers by the end of 1987
  2,200 truck and bus workers, August 1988
- Detroit: 6,600 auto workers by the end of 1987
  700 at Conner Stamping by 1990

Other closings and layoffs have been announced. For Flint, the bad news follows the indefinite layoff of 1,300 workers earlier in the year at the Buick City plant. The Buick City plant had opened just one year before, having cost $350 million to build. And in December, further indefinite layoffs were announced in three of GM's most modern assembly plants, two in Michigan, affecting a total of 4,500 workers. The Michigan plants are in Detroit (2,500) and Orion Township (1,000 workers). Other Michigan cities have also been affected. In August, the Saginaw Nodular Iron Plant, a GM subsidiary, was given up after a failed employee ownership bid; 1,700 jobs were lost.

Of the affected cities, Flint is the most dependent on the auto industry. General Motors employs more than 50,000 workers in Flint, more than one-third of the city's total population. As a result of the closings, Flint stands to lose $1.5 million a year in income tax and $2.4 million a year in property taxes. The closings will directly affect 16.1 percent of the city's work force.

In Pontiac, the mayor's office estimates that the GM closings will cost between $600,000 and $800,000 in lost income tax revenue. This is in addition to the previously announced closing of a GM foundry. Twelve percent of total city employment will be lost.

In Detroit, a reduction in business activity of between 1.5 and 2 percent over the next three years is anticipated. Wage losses of almost $200 million are possible. Lost property taxes could amount to $1.02 million a year; 2.3 percent of city employment will be lost. In all estimates, the full impact, including on suppliers, could be considerably greater.

ALTHOUGH THE UAW HAS NEGOTIATED an array of protections for laid-off workers, many of the directly affected workers will never recover their buying power. A Bureau of Labor Statistics study on workers who lost their jobs between 1979 and 1984 found that workers displaced from the auto industry who found new jobs suffered an average loss in gross weekly earnings of 25 percent. A UAW study of displaced auto workers found that along with lower wages, of those who were reemployed, 65 percent are in nonunion jobs and only 63 percent of those in new jobs were receiving health insurance.

The same day that *Ward's Automotive News* reported the GM closings, it was announced that GM would open two parts plants in joint ventures with Daewoo near Taegu, South Korea. Workers' rights were severely limited under martial law in

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Korea throughout the 1970s. Since the military coup in 1980, the ability of workers to bargain collectively has been even more tightly contained. While laying off American workers, GM was simultaneously engaging in joint ventures in a country that is notorious for trade union repression. GM is also expected to open twelve new plants in Mexico in 1987, giving it twenty-nine plants in that country. The average wage rate in Mexico is less than a dollar an hour.

Adding farce to tragedy, the GM closings were followed by the buy-off of H. Ross Perot and three other corporate malcontents for $750 million. *The sum of this "hushmail" (Perot's phrase) is equal to 18.75 percent of GM's 1985 profits. It is also 50 percent more than GM expects to save by closing nine plants and partially closing two others, laying off 29,000 workers.* The Monday after Perot's resignation, GM stock fell by $1.38.

The media response to the plant closings has been technocratic and sanitized. Industry analysts cite a range of corporate woes and declare the employee bloodletting a necessary evil. Auto analyst Maryann Keller says, "The decision should have been made years ago." Joseph Phillippi, an analyst for E.F. Hutton, said the GM announcement was "long overdue, and it's hard to see anything bad about it." A Detroit *Free Press* columnist, citing these remarks, reminded analysts: "The least we can do is remember they are people, for God's sake, not statistics."

The Detroit *Free Press* could only prescribe more free market to an ailing capitalist economy. In October, prior to the official announcement of the GM closings, a *Free Press* editorial on GM declared that "Michigan must try . . . to remove every unnecessary impediment it can to investment and jobs creation in this state." Traditionally, such phrases mean antiunionism, low wage rates, low job security, and reduced protection for workers. The logic of the Reagan era is: to an economy out of control, less control. □

Jim Sleeper

Howard Beach: Black Leaders, White Liberals

Now that "instant analysis" of the Howard Beach tragedy has given way to the criminal justice process and to the combination of symbolic appropriation and amnesia that envelops such events, we need to retrieve a few lessons about leadership from the events of December through February.

The brutal December 20th attack by white youths on three black men, one of them killed by a car as he fled onto a parkway in the early morning darkness, is only one in a grim docket of cases: the Bernhard Goetz subway shootings; the police killing of Eleanor Bumpurs, an elderly black Housing Authority tenant; the February 28 fatal shooting of twenty-seven-year-old Nicholas Bartlett by a group of police officers who claimed he was brandishing a lead pipe; and other, less publicized, cases in which perpetrators motivated at least partly by racism shattered New York's image as a liberal, racially tolerant city.

There is an even longer roll call of such cases on which the books have been officially closed over the past ten years but which few blacks have forgotten: the police murders of young Randy Evans and popular Bedford-Stuyvesant businessman Arthur Miller; the death of Michael Stewart in Transit Police custody; the murder of black transit worker Willie Turks by a white mob not unlike that in Howard Beach; the killing of Harlem honor student Jonah Perry by an off-duty officer; and half a dozen more reported in the media, to say nothing of others ignored by the press but alive in black memory.

"There will never be a murder conviction of a white man who has murdered a black man in New York City," said Alton Maddox, Jr., lawyer for one of the Howard Beach victims. When one considers that even the "open-and-shut" cases mentioned above failed to contravene Maddox's dictum, the black rage that erupted in the wake of Howard Beach seems, if anything, long overdue.

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WHITES CAN'T DEFLECT OR DEFUSE such rage with attempts to separate the few "open-and-shut" cases from others in which black provocation may have raised issues of legitimate white self-defense, or by distinguishing the racist from the nonracist motives of white assailants, or by reciting the toll of black-on-white crime—including the recent murder of a white priest by a young black man who confessed to the crime, yet was acquitted thanks in part to his defense attorney, the same Alton Maddox who denounces the acquittals of murderous whites. Making these points rightly leaves even white New Yorkers who are skeptical of black grievances uncomfortable. Yes, there's an intolerable level of black crime, as they claim. And so there is white fear and rage and even white vigilante action to dispense "rough justice." What then? Beirut without end?

It is precisely in trying to avoid such a fate that we have to examine the performance of black leadership in the wake of Howard Beach, and to mention the sense of grievance felt by those whites who've really tried to bear witness to racist injustice and forge interracial movements deeper than the point/counterpoint of recent debates about "whose violence" is most dangerous to society. Even those of us who hold white racism to be the original and enduring sin couldn't help but despair at the direction of some of the recent protests. It was not just because our vanity was wounded by antiwhite rhetoric that seemed to discount our good will and our actual support and occasional sacrifice, but, more important, because we do accept blacks' own claim that ultimately a good deal of the most astute and potent leadership in resolving these matters will have to come from blacks themselves.

Where was such leadership, politically and legally, in the wake of Howard Beach? In asking that question, we should avoid the "all's well that ends well" assumption that since the special prosecutor in the case has brought indictments the local district attorney couldn't or wouldn't, black leaders' political and legal strategies have been vindicated.

Politically, many New York black leaders invoked South Africa as the mirror-image of America during the Howard Beach protests, as if ours weren't an overwhelmingly white society in which many hard-pressed whites share grievances with blacks. *Surely, if we can't unite, there will be no constructive change.* Surely no black or white leader worthy of the name dare lose sight of this elementary truth, bend though he or she must at times to the separatist or racist impulses of angry crowds.

Even New York City, now less than half white, will never have a majority of any one ethnic or racial group. Not only do burgeoning Asian and Hispanic communities encompass dozens of nationalities, but the city's 1.8 million blacks include 500,000 West Indian, Haitian, and Panamanian black immigrants whose experiences and agendas mesh imperfectly with those of American blacks. Hence rhetoric that serves only to "up the ante" by invoking a racial struggle as elemental as the one in South Africa is doomed. Withdrawal from what so many black leaders called the "white" economy, "white" press, and "white" criminal justice system is really withdrawal from any chance of meaningful black survival in multi-ethnic New York.

As with politics, so it was with legal strategy. Although racist misconduct by police officers seems to have been a factor in the mishandling of the Howard Beach investigation immediately after the assaults, Maddox's and fellow attorney C. Vernon Mason's charges of a "cover-up" by the district attorney rested primarily on their insistence that court officer Dominick Blum, whose car struck Michael Griffith on the parkway, was an accomplice of the white assailants. In fact, Blum turned out to be an amateur actor who, returning home from watching a play at Brooklyn College, had just dropped off a black friend with whom he'd shared the stage on several occasions. In short, probably the kind of ordinary white New Yorker whom any movement for racial justice would have to embrace.

Blum left the scene of the accident and drove home, probably terrified by the suspicion that he'd hit more than a "tire or animal," as he claimed. But after consultation with his father, a police officer whose very occupation satisfied Maddox that he must have been a racist accomplice in Griffith's death, Dominick Blum returned to the scene. *How many would?* It may be appropriate to charge him with leaving the scene, and the special prosecutor has promised a full investigation of Blum's role. But so far it appears that the two lawyers used him and, even when the smear was discredited, they hadn't the political wisdom or good grace to recant through some impressive gesture to Blum that could have disarmed and reconciled the frightened, alienated stratum of whites he represents.

Even more dispiriting than this want of political imagination and sheer decency is the fact that Maddox was cheered by 2,000 blacks in a high school auditorium from which the "white" press, which had so offended him by challenging his Blum scenario, was barred. Representative Charles

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Rangel and Judge Bruce Wright did question the wisdom of using Blum's alleged escape from "punishment" as grounds for noncooperation with the D.A. But no black leader has contradicted Maddox's scenario, let alone proposed the kind of gesture to Blum that might really win whites over. It fell to Jesse Jackson to make the general point, both implicitly by staying away from the protests and legal maneuverings, and explicitly in a *New York Times* op ed essay linking black and white working people's interests.

Most of the city's black leaders, by contrast, endorsed the "cover-up" charge as a basis for demanding that Governor Mario Cuomo replace the D.A. with a special prosecutor. They got that, because the victims' and lawyers' refusal to cooperate with the D.A. had evoked the specter of white acquittals or minor convictions at best. Now that the special prosecutor has discredited Maddox's Blum scenario and his client's testimony on the way to generating stronger indictments, it seems clear that Cuomo's intervention actually saved black leaders from their own disastrous intransigence more than it vindicated their charges of bad faith at the local level. The D.A.'s performance may ultimately be shown to have been inadequate compared to special prosecutor Charles Hynes's impressive concentration of effort. But it may also be true that, with black cooperation and more time, the D.A. would have achieved similar results. For example, the mere fact of Cedric Sandiford's cooperation, however inadequate his information, helped Hynes "turn" the white youths who had held back from the D.A.

The point is not to defend the local D.A.'s apparently mixed reputation or to discount Hynes's achievement, but to assess the wisdom of black strategy. The antiwhite rhetoric, the invocations of Johannesburg, and the legal mistake of the Blum scenario not only squandered the genuine concern of many "ordinary" whites after the assaults; they also forced many white activists to choose between alienation and condescension unless they were willing to keep a safe distance and settle for platitudes. Alienation, because even those inclined to overlook antiwhite rhetoric find it hard to lend themselves to a "movement" that employs patently false claims and posits implicitly that blacks can go it alone in any struggle for economic justice in New York. Condescension, because the price of admission to continuing dialogue with the black editors, writers, elected officials, and lawyers whom white activists had known over the years seemed suddenly to be that whites refrain from criticizing Maddox's destructive tactics. A February 16 *National Law Journal* feature on Maddox was more forthright, detailing his long history of sabotaging cases to prove to blacks that the system can't work. (The article also describes Maddox's harrowing youthful encounters with police in his native Georgia—a salutary reminder that it *was* "the system" that taught this man to hate.

It is unlikely that, should the "cover-up" charges that led to the appointment of Hynes prove unfounded, either Cuomo or Hynes will make much noise saying so. Certainly the governor has every political incentive to let the Queens D.A., already tainted by charges of prosecutorial passivity, undue political ambition, and questionable associations, be the fall guy for yielding to black demands for a special prosecutor. The emphasis in public will be on "leaving all this behind us and moving forward."

LEFT BEHIND WILL BE ALL those who wonder whether Maddox's deceitful and destructive attacks were really the vehicle blacks needed to win justice, or whether, as I believe, the strategy only compounded blacks' problems as exotic appendages to the polity, playing by special rules and thereby only confirming racist whites in their prejudice.

We must never lose sight of the fact that the justification for black rage is real, that racism in the criminal justice system is pervasive and routine. The question posed by Howard Beach, however, goes further: how and on what terms can whites who condemn that racism join with blacks to combat it? Even given the leadership shown by Cuomo and Hynes, the answer to that question remains unclear, the more so because recent newspaper polls suggest that even most blacks doubt the

Such a Nice Boy

Last week, Senator David Durenberger (R-Minn.), former chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, revealed that several committee members believed [Assistant Secretary of State Elliott] Abrams misled them in secret session in November about his role in seeking third-country *contra* aid. Abrams testified that he had no role, Durenberger said.

"He was called on the carpet for that and explained differences in his testimony—not necessarily to everyone's satisfaction," Durenberger told the *Miami Herald*. "I wouldn't trust Elliott Abrams any further than I could throw Oliver North."

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existence of an actual "cover-up"—though not, understandably, of police misconduct in the wake of the assaults.

These blacks, too, are a constituency needing leadership. And that is perhaps the saddest aspect of Howard Beach, because they have so much to give. After all, the road to reconciliation won't be paved with a finding by Hynes that the D.A. wasn't doing his job; it can only be paved with new outreach and organizing, across racial lines, some of it coming, as it has most promisingly, from black trade unionists, clergy, and community leaders in Queens who have welcomed rather than rebuffed the expressions of concern and solidarity from their white counterparts.

Whether it's a question of educating youths like those who participated in the assaults, or winning back the Dominick Blums who should never have been lost, or of reassuring white activists that, yes, only *interracial* movements can win justice in America, the answer, perhaps unfairly and ironically, lies with the victims. At certain critical moments in any struggle, only the oppressed hold the power to close the circle of redemption. □

Anthony Borden

The Textbook Battle in Tennessee

HAWKINS COUNTY

Sitting in a pew at the Cedarview Methodist Church in Kingsport, I was chatting with Jennie Wilson, grandmother of two of the children in the Hawkins County school system who, through a trial this past July, won the right to opt out of reading classes that cover material their parents consider religiously offensive. Wilson was telling me about the growing "globalist" conspiracy, which aims at establishing an atheistic one-world government. Some of the details were funny: she'd heard that the United Nations was built on a piece of land that used to be called Babel. And some were indisputable, though a *Dissent* reader would view them from opposite political ground: American democracy is very imperfect; the power structure is dominated by the wealthy; and the mass media are ideologically conformist.

Taken together, the details suggest a worldview both deeply frightened and supremely, or divinely, confident. Wilson sees evidence everywhere of a humanist conspiracy to wipe out Christianity, but knows it will ultimately fail. This new globalism represents for her and many fundamentalists the final stage of history before God brings about the Apocalypse. It is central to their objection to the "forced" teaching of "secular humanism," which they believe led the Hawkins County schools to suspend fourteen students. Yet she did not agree when I asked whether nuclear weapons are the means by which God is going to wreak his devastation. She echoed the preacher, who had just said from the pulpit that there are signs the Kingdom is approaching. But, she continued, "When the destruction of the world comes, it will not be from some old nuclear war. We will not be able to brag throughout history: 'Look what we did.' When it happens, God will do it. . . . Though I expect there will be a big bang, don't you?"

JENNIE AND HER HUSBAND, Marion, also gave me a rundown on the local political machine, which they said had forced them to turn to the courts to resolve the school dispute. As an example they described the arrest for trespassing of Vicki Frost, the plaintiffs' main witness in the textbook trial, after she had gone to the school one day to take her children out of class. Jennie told me that phone records from different public offices revealed a flurry of conversations around that time among the mayor, the police chief, and members of the school board. This convinced the Wilsons that there had been a plot to arrest Frost in order to intimidate the concerned

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parents. As it happened, Frost herself had notified the police of her intention to pull her child from class in defiance of the school board ruling.

All other accounts I could obtain about that incident, as a result of which the court, in a separate trial, awarded Frost damages, suggested an entirely bungled, not orchestrated, affair. Still, I was anxious to discover a long-brewing local feud that had suddenly broken open. What I found was a very homogeneous community, with almost everyone on both sides of the case a political conservative and a religious fundamentalist. (This is particularly interesting, since the plaintiffs claim that the textbooks, far from being simply unbalanced, are hostile to their faith.) Jean Price, principal of the middle school, told me the experience of the case had not changed any of her political or religious beliefs, but, she said, "Finding yourself in the same camp as these people really makes you think."

Much animosity in town seems to be spent arguing over who was the first to contact a national organization. Was it Norman Lear's People for the American Way—yes, I was told that they are communist—that started it all, issuing orders from Washington to help the school defeat the educational freedom fighters? Or was this mess a calculated test case, plotted by Beverly LaHaye's Concerned Women of America to take place in a town called Church Hill but designed to affect all the nation's schools?

The more important question is whether the case was in fact the quintessential test of American civil rights that supporters of the plaintiffs have claimed. Strange political alliances are not uncommon where First Amendment issues are at stake, and perhaps leftists should have defended the fundamentalists, as many did Samuel Loring Morrison, who was convicted in 1985 for selling public though nominally classified military documents to the British journal *Jane's Defence Weekly*. Indeed, from their campaign against pornography, some feminists have found that fundamentalists can make energetic, if awkward, comrades. Toward the end of our conversation, Pastor James Fields of the Cedarview Church promised to defend to the death my right to practice any religious or political views. Wouldn't I do the same? What conceivable reason could there be for refusing to allow a dozen or so kids to sit out a few classes that offend their parents' religious beliefs?

One of the primary reasons, according to the counsel for the school board, is that a "cafeteria" educational system will disrupt classrooms and bureaucratize teachers' jobs, as they try to keep track of who's sitting out where because of what. Far from being short term, the organizational difficulties would presumably persist for the duration of a student's career, since the plaintiffs were objecting to the entire basic reading course. This argument did not sway Judge Thomas Hull, as the plaintiffs were able to present witnesses claiming that such havoc would not occur. Hull is known as a pragmatist, and he limited his ruling to the fourteen children and the Holt, Rinehart and Winston reading series directly involved. But his disclaimer, stating that the ruling should not apply to future cases, is legally dubious as well as unrealistic.

Although the Christian movement to influence the public-school curriculum has local origins, the national inspiration and financing it receives assures that opt-out challenges will be common, especially in the South, if this ruling is allowed to stand. It will add one more censorial strategy to a campaign that stretches throughout the country. A celebrated trial in Alabama, on which the ruling was pending as this article went to press, seeks to determine whether secular humanism is a religion and thus ought to be excluded from public schools. A dispute in Panama City, Florida, became violent when fundamentalists threatened the lives of three teachers and tried to set fire to the apartment of a local journalist. The school there offered to allow three students to read alternative selections, but their parents complained that doing so would stigmatize those children.

Of course in Tennessee the sight of children marching out of the room every day could also stigmatize the books for those who remain to discuss them. And educators can be forced to judge texts by religious criteria without the kind of drama as in Florida—where the offending book was finally removed from the curriculum. Anxious to head off book battles, they act quickly to scratch potentially offensive books from reading lists. Here, where the unemployment rate in some counties reaches 25 percent, the next opt-out challenge might be accompanied by the argument that Hull's plan—whereby the school tests the children's reading skills but the parents pay for the alternative books and teach their youngsters at home—discriminates against single or impoverished parents who cannot afford the extra time or money. And although Hull unofficially certified the plaintiffs' abilities, some parents might not be competent or conscientious enough to teach.

Nevertheless, the "floodgates" objection to the ruling makes civil libertarians uncomfortable. An

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alleged impracticality should never stand in the way of remedying social injustice, as the experience of busing shows. But there is a basic difference between opting out and busing, which reaches to the heart of what both public education and the fundamentalists' case against it are all about.

One explanation of why this case received such extensive national attention is that it seemed to contradict the forward-looking image then Governor Lamar Alexander had long been cultivating for his state. After Nissan, General Motors, and American Airlines had initiated major new projects in Tennessee, here came another Scopes trial. Once again those hill folk at the foot of the old coal mountains were charting an independent course, as they had done during the Civil War, when they refused to secede from the Union. East Tennesseans were disappointed that the trial served to reinforce the hillbilly stereotype, even though most saw the case as isolated and insignificant. And because these fundamentalists had, in effect, put intellectual freedom on the stand, much of the media may have become blinded to how shrewd they actually are. Frost earned an amount of notoriety for her statement "Our childrens' imagination has to be bounded"—though she contends that there is ample imaginative freedom for her kids within a religious framework. And Robert Mozert, who lent his name to the case, has allegedly demanded a dress code in the schools, a mandatory Pledge of Allegiance, and a curtailment of sex education—though he denies this, explaining Jennie Wilson forged his signature on a letter to the editor of the local paper. Since those reported overstatements, however, the plaintiffs have carefully restricted the terms of their argument to avoid addressing the broader implications of the trial. They make a practical religious argument, not a theoretical educational one, and thus crowd under the First Amendment banner.

The fundamentalists insist they are not trying to get religion into the schools. I asked Frost whether she had first attempted to resolve her complaints about the Holt books through more conventional channels before pulling her kids from the classroom. No, she said, because she had no desire to influence the curriculum for any children but her own. But if this case was about basic American freedoms, as she emotionally claims, what's the long-term solution? To this question both Frost and Mozert responded that they are not educational experts and have no advice. In fact, Frost said, she did not really even care what might happen elsewhere, though she stated at one point: "This decision is a real victory for parents—for me as a parent, for freedom in the schools."

Although southern preachers are famous for their rhetorical eloquence, many of their listeners are unlettered, particularly in areas more isolated than Hawkins County, which is located near the "Tri-Cities" of Bristol, Kingsport, and Johnson City. Representative Jim Cooper has calculated that his congressional district, which borders that of Hawkins County, ranks 427th out of 435 in terms of the educational level of its residents. And in Hancock County, which is contiguous to Hawkins, 71 percent of the adults have not completed high school. It is fitting, then, that the fundamentalist church is so entirely a textual one. The preachers endlessly quote "chapter and verse" to congregations in which many of the members may have read no other book since their teenage years but the Bible. It may be only in this environment, where the idea of interpretation as a personal act is so foreign, that a serious belief in a "literal" reading of God's word could flourish. During Pastor Fields's sermon he spoke convincingly about man's need to avoid self-righteousness, and then launched into a harsh criticism of "liberals" who read the Beatitudes as a tract about social justice.

This background helps explain the fundamentalists' complaints about the Holt series. Given a basic disagreement with the premise of a "neutral" secularism that the public schools are based on, the plaintiffs are bound to interpret passages as contrary to their beliefs, even if the reasoning sometimes seems forced. Jennie Wilson told me that the sentence from one reader, "Jesus needed his scribes," teaches children that Christ was illiterate. When I suggested that a businessperson's use of a secretary does not imply that she or he cannot write, Marion explained that the textual offense here hinged on the word "needed." The more neutral "used" might be acceptable. Frost assured me that she does not object to her kids learning the history of other religions, but she draws the line when books such as the Holt series force students actually to practice objectionable faiths. Thus a story about the trial in Salem could be included as long as no "incantations" were printed. Besides suggesting that the accused in Massachusetts were witches, Frost said that reading such a passage would be a sin for her children.

Mozert gave me one more example of anti-Christian material, the story "Marvin's Manhole," from a second-grade reader *People Need People*, which,

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he contends, teaches children that parents lie. When Marvin, a black child, asks his mother what a manhole cover is, she says it's merely a plate to allow workers to get to the pipes under the street, though Marvin suspects it lets into a frightening world filled with monsters. A few days later, he finds the cover off and a ladder protruding. Unable to resist, Marvin climbs down and is terrified when he bumps into something alive. "MOTHER!" he screams. The worker he has disturbed explains that indeed there's nothing underground but pipes. Marvin has learned his lesson, but the next day he asks his mother about the funny-looking cage in the street. She explains the function of a gutter, but the story ends with Marvin thinking, "I knew that wasn't right. A cage is a cage." This fine tale, by Winifred Rosen, finds a way to show children that parents know a lot but it's good to let your imagination run anyway. The plaintiffs in Hawkins County find it a subversive antiauthoritarian message. Mozert said Marvin should have been punished for his deviating thoughts.

The court transcript is filled with examples of many other offensive stories, and case by case is an easy way to ridicule the fundamentalists. It is also beside the point. Their real objection is with the "context" of the reading series, outside of which no one story is necessarily impermissible.

The trial in Hawkins County, then, comes down to a debate over the basic mission of public education. The fundamentalists I spoke to made no secret of their disdain for every aspect of public schooling except that it is "free." Mozert argued that it exceeds its charter by teaching more than just reading skills—it indoctrinates. Since children through the eighth grade are too vulnerable to "confusion" when exposed to conflicting religious and political views, he proposed that students through that level read "Dick and Jane" stories, as if those or any books could be "pure" readers without their own messages. On my last day in Hawkins County I was wakened just before 7:00 A.M. by a call from Jennie Wilson. Though I didn't get exactly why she phoned, I was able to scribble down these three sentences: "When [conflicting books] are side by side, you see that you cannot include their point of view. How could you have one story say there isn't a God and the next story say there is? You cannot do that."

Some observers were surprised that Hull, who originally threw the case out of court until a higher court remanded it for trial, ruled in favor of the plaintiffs. But in a sense he threw the case out a second time, relegating to a short footnote in his opinion the essential issue of the trial. "There is no question that the reading texts teach more than just how to read," he wrote at the bottom of page twelve, implying that public schools have no right to do that. Although the scope of textbook material has been pared down to avoid contention, the Holt series does appear to teach tolerance, both of others and of oneself. Each story seems designed to assure a different sort of child—whether of a minority race or religion, or one who's a little clumsy, or who feels uncomfortable with a gender stereotype—that she or he is still OK. And the white Christian child is meant to learn to be equally accepting of those differences. Although the plaintiffs have sought to portray educators as uncompromising, it is fundamentalism itself that is based on complete intolerance. The parents in Hawkins County will not allow a philosophy of mutual acceptance to be taught to their children.

The remedy in *Mozert v. Hawkins County Public Schools*—that is, opting out—suggests that the case was about fourteen children and one particular course. But if the ruling is ultimately upheld by the Supreme Court, it will be legally applicable to any district in the country. And what conservatives will have won is the right, for religious reasons, to place restrictions on the schools' ability to set the curriculum. By accepting the plaintiffs' premise that their children are entitled to other school benefits even though they have been instructed to reject its central project, Judge Hall implies that the public schools are just another outlet for public money, like Medicare or Social Security. Tax money, in fact, may be what this trial was finally about. It is a short step from a course-by-course opt-out plan to other conservative educational proposals such as tuition tax credits, or a voucher system in which parents would have access to public educational funds in order to spend them at private institutions.

Public schools must be able to set their own basic curriculum, and the tolerant, broad-ranging one Hawkins County selected, regardless of imperfections, is the only one a pluralistic society can accept. Frost argues that her children were denied a public education and that that amounts to "taxation without representation." This claim reveals the confusion of politics and religion behind the case. For she also asserts that her kids must be taught from a Christian perspective. No one is denying her that right. But the constitutional guarantee of the right to practice any religion freely does not promise the right to carry out that practice within the public schools. □

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Josephine Woll

Daring Voices in Soviet Films

Moscow

In the Winter 1987 *Dissent* Roy Medvedev singled out the Soviet theater as the artistic medium most quickly responsive to cultural changes. After describing some of the politically daring plays on Moscow's stages, Medvedev added an appropriate caveat about the limits of "openness" imposed even nowadays.

In the past such caveats would have applied to Soviet movies in spades. Soviet movies routinely undergo a system of censorship at least as complicated and crippling as those that confound the other arts. From conception to distribution, every film treads a minefield. The result has been a large number of conservative, unimaginative, and formulaic movies.

All the more surprising, then, is recent activity in the film world. At the congress of the Cinematographers' union last spring, cinema workers expelled the hard-line old guard with a fervor unmatched by the Writers' (or any other) union, and elected the controversial director Elem Klimov as first secretary. This past December the chairman of the cinematography committee of the union, Filipp Yermash—who prevented a sizable number of films from being released—was replaced by a man ten years younger and presumably less hidebound.

The "thaw" is advertised, if not in neon—which Soviet marquees eschew—then in the posters that adorn walls all over Moscow. In November two films by the recently deceased director Andrei Tarkovsky (of *Andrei Rublev* fame) were playing for the first time since his emigration several years ago. At least a dozen movies made up to fifteen years ago but never distributed, are now in circulation. One is *Agonia*, Klimov's film about the Romanovs, which was released in the West under the title *Rasputin*. Another, *Roadcheck*, is one of three movies made by the gifted director Aleksandr German. *Roadcheck* depicts a Soviet deserter during the war. Certainly no hero, he is a complex character not wholly undeserving of sympathy. The Party man—conventionally a fount of all virtue—is next thing to a villain, inhuman in his cold rectitude and harmful to his own side because his intolerance precludes understanding (and making use of) the deserter.

Another film not long off the shelf, and consistently playing to packed houses, is Gleb Panfilov's *Theme*. Set in the ancient, beautiful town of Vladimir in winter, *Theme* depicts the artistic impotence that results from moral compromise. The protagonist is a famous and successful writer who, after a lifetime of hackwork, decides to write "honestly." He is set off against two other creative figures, one a poet whose integrity cost him public recognition, the other an artist whose unwillingness to compromise has made him resolve to emigrate. Although the film itself ends with a compromise—a car wreck that gets the hero off the hook—it is a bitter indictment of an art that conforms to externally set standards.

Some impressive recent Soviet films belong to the "gritty realism" school, and many come from the Leningrad film studio. (Films from the republics, especially from Georgia and the Baltic states, are widely considered to be of high quality, but in

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Moscow they play only irregularly.) One director, Dinara Asanova, made a number of fascinating studies of troubled adolescents, working with a stable group of adult actors and often using nonprofessionals for the kids' roles. Her last film, completed before her untimely death a few years ago, is called *Patsany* (*Kids*). It is an exceptionally sensitive, almost entirely unsentimental look at teenaged boys who get in trouble with the law and spend a summer in a kind of work camp under the tutelage of two social workers. Asanova shows, without overt moralizing, the wretched homes from which the boys come, but she doesn't exculpate the kids, and in one scene shows them in the grip of mob fever, on a destructive rampage through the camp.

More romantic is another Leningrad film, made a few years ago, *Winter Cherries*. Three unmarried women, neighbors in an apartment house, share day care for their young children and daydream of love and security, seemingly forever out of reach. It sounds like soap opera, but the women's everyday life is presented soberly, without adornment. Only the exceptional beauty of the lead actress, and the exceptional implausibility of her diplomat-suitor (an anti-Western caricature) disturb the realistic tenor of the film.

In general, Soviet movies seem strongest when they are most realistic. Often they hurt themselves with sentimental moralizing, ideological pugnacity, or studied artfulness. A brand-new film, for instance, is first-rate when it shows the Kirov Ballet company from the inside: there is a marvelous scene between the artists and the bureaucrats, who debate whether a ballet version of Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita* can be performed. But when *Fuete* (*Pirouette*) indulges in Felliniesque interludes—the prima ballerina drifting, in translucent dresses, over something resembling sand dunes crossed with cloud banks—the pirouettes fall flat.

WEAK AND STRONG, realistic and fantastic, political and aesthetic are almost irrelevant categories when it comes to a film that was the sensation of Moscow this past fall, Tengiz Abuladze's *Pokaianie* (*Repentance*). "The release of this movie," said Roy Medvedev in an interview with *Washington Post* reporter Celestine Bohlen, "will be the most important event in Soviet cultural life in at least a decade." (Oct. 31, 1986.) The prominent literary critic Vladimir Lakshin used terms like "catharsis" and "eye-opener" in a piece published in late November and looked forward to the general release of *Repentance*.

Both Medvedev and Lakshin emphasize the film's "general release," and for good reason. Until the end of January, despite official promises of distribution to theaters and eventually to television, *Repentance* had been screened only to select audiences in select places—the Writers' union club, the House of Cinema (Cinematographers' union club), the Artists' Union. These audiences comprise the bulk of the Moscow artistic and intellectual elite, a disproportionately influential group. Now the general public has a chance to see the movie and judge for itself.

Though it is fashionable in certain Moscow circles to decry *Repentance* as artistically derivative (the influence of Bergman and Fellini is clear), no one who has seen the film denies its political and cultural significance. Set in an imaginary country ruled by an imaginary dictator, *Repentance* insists that the only way to move forward is by exorcising the past. Such an exorcism precludes excuses and rationalizations.

REPENTANCE HAS TWO OVERLAPPING CENTERS, past and present. Abuladze deliberately blurs the line between the two by presenting flashbacks without any transition, by using the same actor (the brilliant Aftondil Makharadze) to play both the dictator, Varlam, and his son, Abel, and by introducing purposely jarring anachronisms and odd juxtapositions, like a judge who wears the mortarboard of a medieval academic and fiddles with a Rubik's Cube.

In the "present" the middle-aged Abel is unwilling to face the legacy of his father until he is forced to by his own son's repudiation. Abel justifies Varlam's crimes: "Your grandfather did nothing bad. It was complicated. We were surrounded by enemies. . . . What is the fate of one man when the fate of millions is at stake? . . . Varlam always had the interests of the populace at heart, but he wasn't always in control. . . . He himself never harmed anyone." * The message is explicit: it is this kind of falsification and revisionism that brings the dead

*The text of *Repentance* has not been published. Quotations are not verbatim; they are from notes scribbled down in the dark, from the Russian voice-over translation of the Georgian dialogue. But they are reasonably accurate.

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Varlam back to life, popping up in the garden, leaning against a tree, sprawled in an armchair. In one scene Abel's wife, lithe and graceful, dances at the side of Varlam's coffin—until Varlam, slowly putting on his glasses, looks about, pulls up his shroud as if it were a blanket, and turns on his side to get more comfortable for sleep.

It is a terrifying notion—the dictator who won't stay in his grave—and Abuladze exploits the dilemma of his present-day heirs skillfully. But it is the scenes of the past that make *Repentance* emotionally devastating for Soviet audiences. The director's vision of the Great Terror pits Varlam, whose personal despotism is backed by the state terror machine, against the doomed artist Sandro, his wife Nino and his daughter Kati. In chilling images Abuladze conjures up the stink of pervasive, hopeless dread. The audience holds its breath together with Nino and Sandro as they lie in a field, covered with clods of earth, while Varlam pursues them in a car and his henchmen, in medieval armor, give chase on horses. Hands clench involuntarily when Nino and Kati, searching in a lumberyard for the names and locations of prisoners they've been told are carved into logs, watch the logs disappear in a cascade of sawdust. There are men and women in the audience old enough to remember people like the broken prisoner who tells Sandro, "We have to give [the investigators] thousands of names, to the point of absurdity—so many names that no one could possibly believe it. Don't we?" and who then throws back his head and howls.

With a toothbrush moustache like Hitler's and octagonal, rimless glasses like Beria's, with Stalin's sinister theatricality and profound paranoia, Varlam is an amalgam of dictators, an ur-dictator. In less than the blink of an eye his joviality turns to ice, his calm to hysteria. He harangues the crowds, demanding vigilance because "four out of every three people are our enemy"; he flamboyantly jumps out of a window to leave a room and then, an impossible moment later, stands framed in the doorway of the room as if his movements obeyed different laws from the rest of us. He is diabolical and supreme but not, in Abuladze's film, alone: illiterate thugs abet him, and so do sophisticated true believers who are caught in his spell until they too, inevitably, are arrested and vanish.

The release of *Repentance* is a major straw in the wind of changing times for experienced Muscovites. There are other straws. Several poems of Nabokov's have been printed, and two of his early books are to be published this year. *Dr. Zhivago*, at long last, is scheduled for publication later this year, as is Anatoly Rybakov's novel about the Terror, *Children of the Arbat*. A number of poets long in disfavor are giving readings and lectures and their work is beginning to appear in print. There are the plays Medvedev wrote about, and the movies. At Moscow's main exhibit hall, the Manezh, there have even been mélanges of rock music, mime, and recitation. *Repentance* has had the greatest impact among the Moscow intelligentsia because of its artistic excellence, and because it so nakedly bares the Stalinist abscess. People are astounded: "I never thought I would live to see this on a Soviet screen," said one sophisticated university professor. With people like her, the screening of *Repentance* has won Gorbachev more credit, and more wary trust, than all his five-hour speeches combined.

WHICH IS SURELY ONE REASON THE FILM has been screened. Gorbachev needs the support of this small but critically important part of the Soviet population to make his reforms work. For this fundamentally disaffected elite, a genuine examination of the past—and especially of the Terror, which carried off its parents and grandparents—is perhaps the only way to revive some sense of commitment. *Repentance* also signals Gorbachev's own position, and puts on notice representatives of the Stalinist mentality, which is alive and well in the party and government.

No one who lived through the Khrushchev pe-

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riod and its repressive aftermath, let alone the earlier years, is anything but skeptical; some, particularly young people, are downright cynical. But there is—in cultural matters, anyway—a real sense of excitement and possibility. Given the distribution of *Roadcheck*, *Theme*, and *Kids*, above all the release of *Repentance*, that excitement doesn't seem to be wholly misplaced. □

Joel Bleifuss

Spain: Democracy With Difficulties

Spain has problems. Twenty-two percent of its labor force is unemployed, a rate exceeded nowhere in Europe. Reindustrialization is more than a sight down the road. Heroin has spawned a bloodless crime wave by desperate, often apologetic, unemployed youth. Bloodletting is left to the Basque separatists of ETA, who continue to kill with tacit support from 17 percent of the Basque population, which last June voted for Henri Batasuna, candidate of the one nationalist party that refuses to condemn the ETA. Add two other blast-happy acronymic organizations and you begin to see why political violence follows unemployment as the Spaniards' main worry.

In the litany on "the decline of Europe" you would expect Spanish voices to be among the loudest. They aren't. Providing jobs and halting political violence pose seemingly insurmountable problems. Ideology divides the country like no other in Europe. However, Spain's troubles are offset by a richness of public life, born of tradition and nursed on socialist government policy, that has made new Spain a cultural hub of Europe. Faith in the future unites the country with an infectious, if darkly Spanish, optimism.

When you go by the Puerta de Alcalá, eighteenth-century Madrid's monumental gate built by Carlos III, you can still see the scars left by bullets during the Fall of Madrid in March 1939. The pitted granite remains—a quiet memorial to a civil war that killed 700,000 people and inaugurated thirty-seven years of fascist rule. In 1975, while official thought in the United States was successfully shucking the Vietnam experience, the opponents of Franco's dictatorship were rallying at the funerals of the fallen, sending vodka-injected oranges to friends in packed prisons, and going to bed—forbidden books hidden—in fear of late-night official knocks.

On November 20, 1975, General Franco died. Champagne sold out in Madrid. The Franco-educated middle class, "the stupid generation," stood an anxious watch. Nineteen-seventy-six began as a year of an untethered national police, bloody strikes, daily demonstrations, and great hope. In the autumn of that year fascist Spain quietly fell and political democracy emerged under the unforeseen tutelage of Franco's chosen heir, King Juan Carlos. This monarch, cleverly defying rightist expectations, appointed liberal Franco politicians to a transitional government that he charged with drawing up a democratic constitution.

Today—fifty years after the start of the Spanish Civil War and ten years into democracy—Spain is governed by PSOE (Socialist Workers Party of Spain). During the years of transition, PSOE presented itself as the palatable left alternative to a nation nursed on the fear of communism. At PSOE's 1974 biennial congress in Suresnes, France, a group of young socialists under the leadership of the current party president, Felipe González, deposed their hidebound elders—aged Republicans who had spent the Franco years refighting old battles. The Socialist party under the "young professionals," as the new leaders were soon termed, portrayed itself as modernization incarnate. The young professionals were modern,

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well-dressed, foreign-educated, and moderate. PSOE moved to woo the liberal center and in October 1982 it captured the *Cortes* (parliament) with 48 percent of the vote, up from 29 percent in 1977. Spaniards returned the young socialists (the average age of the fifteen men in González's new cabinet is forty-three) to a second-year term in office in June 1986, this time with a plurality of 44 percent.

Since the first post-Franco election in 1977, the Union of the Democratic Center (UCD), in coalition with the Liberal party, had governed Spain. The leader of this centrist coalition, and the new Spain's first elected president, was Adolfo Suárez. The center's decline was due in part to the loss of Suárez, who resigned from the presidency in January 1981, a month before the only crisis the new democratic Spain has faced—an attempted *coup d'état* by a cabal of fascist generals.

On February 23, 1981, a Colonel Tejero and a band of soldiers stormed the *Cortes* with guns blasting as it was choosing Suárez's colorless successor, Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo. King Juan Carlos, the head of the military and a man the generals failed to consider, stood by the constitution. The rebellion collapsed. Tejero was jailed and the responsible generals put to pasture. Santiago Carrillo, chairman of the Spanish Communist Party (PCE), who had originally nicknamed the king Juan Carlos the Brief, said after the coup that democracy could survive a thousand years with a monarchy like that.

The UCD lost out to the Socialists in October 1982 when it saw its share of the vote tumble to 7 percent from a 47 percent high in 1977. Then in June 1986 Suárez and his Social and Democratic Center, a new party he formed in 1981, emerged on the political scene, running a populist campaign that, from "the left," attacked González's foreign policy and the "warlocks" that control Spain's seven largest banks. Suárez and his party got over 9 percent of the vote and 19 seats in the *Cortes*, making them the main beneficiaries of what little electoral discontent the four years of Socialist rule had fostered.

Attacks from the Right, Splintering on the Left

WHAT SIZABLE OPPOSITION there is to PSOE comes from the right in the form of a coalition of parties, *Coalición Popular*. The head of this coalition is a former Franco minister, the graceless Manuel Fraga. *Coalición Popular* might have been able to maintain itself as a viable party had its Franquista leaders been parliamentary men. They were, however, inexperienced in the democratic process and it showed. In the 1986 election the right saw its vote remain at its 1982 level of 26 percent. *Coalición Popular* appears doomed to be the cranky voice of the propertied class. Even its slogans fail. Metro graffiti in Salamanca, a barrio of well-heeled *Madrileños*, read, "Under Franco we lived better," until a few strokes of the spray changed "we" to "some of us."

The stability of Spain's Socialists inspires envy on the European left. The lefts in France, Great Britain, and Germany have in recent years helped elect socialists to office and then watched their governments shuffle off their campaign platforms, tilt towards the center and finally topple back into opposition. PSOE has taken that self-same path but managed to remain in power: a moderately socialist government with an absolute parliamentary majority.

This staying power provides meager solace to those on the Spanish left who voted PSOE as a viable alternative in 1982 and then saw their socialist majority dole out piecemeal reform and lockstep with the U.S.-dominated NATO bloc.

The Spanish Communist party, that beacon of Eurocommunism, led the rebellion against the Franco dictatorship. PCE broke with the Soviets in the mid-1950s. Three tendencies guided the party at that time: the older Stalinists satisfied with the Soviet example, the political strategists who saw the move to Eurocommunism as a feasible tactic, and the Eurocommunists who were anti-Stalinist and democratic. During the early 1970s and the turbulent transitional years, the PCE, commanding a sizable following, flourished under the witty and egotistical old fox, party leader Santiago Carrillo. As a legal political party, however, PCE failed to broaden its base of support.

Like the Socialists, the Communists took pains to portray themselves as moderate and capable of governing. PCE moved toward the center with policies that paralleled PSOE's. Deprived of their raison d'être, the Communists made it easy for many leftists to cast a "useful vote" for PSOE and against the right. PCE saw its share of the vote in 1982 fall to 4.13 percent from a high of 9 percent in 1977. In the wake of this defeat the Stalinist tendency began stirring. Carrillo, now a Eurocommunist, put down the book of Gramsci, picked up

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Lenin, and moved to consolidate his position in the party. His gambit failed. The Stalinists abandoned him, and the Eurocommunists expelled him from the party in 1985. PCE, which had stayed united under the fascist boot, now splintered into three parties: the Stalinists, who formed the Spanish Peoples Communist Party; Carrillo and his followers, who set up the Table for Communist Unity (with Carrillo at the head seat); and PCE, which remained Eurocommunist but without a clear path. By this time many intellectuals, artists, and others had quit the party, disgusted by its purges and other sectarian symptoms. PCE was left with noisy internal arguments no one listened to.

In the June 1986 election the Communists had hoped to capitalize on the discontent generated by the Socialist turn to supporting Spain's membership in NATO. PSOE itself was worried and had originally considered putting off the election until October. The reasoning was that the one-third of PSOE supporters who in March had voted against NATO, rejecting the advice of their party, would in October be preoccupied with new worries and feel more disposed to mark a Socialist ballot. Polls showed however that the PSOE left-wing was not sufficiently riled to break ranks, and the elections were moved up to June. PCE's electoral plan was to gain a significant parliamentary minority through its coalition United Left (*Izquierda Unida*), which included the Stalinists but not Carrillo. A similar united-front strategy had worked well enough in the earlier campaign against NATO. As it turned out, though the left public would follow PCE's lead on issues of the heart—and nothing for Spain's left is more heartfelt than distrust of U.S. global intentions—they were not going to vote their future to PCE's oddball coalition in which unrepentant Stalinists cohabitated with an obscure neo-Carlist (monarchist) sect. United Left received 4.6 percent of the vote, and seven deputies in the *Cortes*.

THOUGH FAR FROM FREE OF INTERNAL DISSENT, PSOE does run Spain and from that position of power has been able to accommodate its own dissident wing, the Left Socialists (*Izquierda Socialistas*). PSOE, under the twelve-year tenure of its young professionals, abandoned its traditional republicanism, wrote off Marx in 1978, and opted for the market economy of economic liberalism. The Left Socialists opposed these shifts but were ignored. They were excluded from positions of party leadership and allotted no seats in the *Cortes*. In response they boycotted PSOE's biennial congress in 1981, and Spain watched as one after another of González's proposals went to the floor without debate and passed unanimously. That looked neither good nor democratic. The Left Socialists were quickly brought back into the fold and given a few positions of leadership. But by then Spain's economic and foreign policies had already been shaped and the party had little to do but discuss nuts, bolts, and peripheral issues.

Conflict over NATO

THEN CAME THE NATO REFERENDUM. Felipe González's apparent abandonment of what most Spanish leftists saw as a progressive foreign policy activated intra-party tensions. In 1982 González the candidate was anti-Atlanticist, promising that the Spanish people would decide by referendum whether to stay in NATO. In 1986 González the president was the political realist saying that he too understood the desire for peace motivating the opponents of NATO, but.... He said Europe is a community of neighbors and neighbors have an obligation to provide for a common defense. A neutral Spain outside NATO would, he said, suffer political isolation and economic hardship. González argued that Spain would act as a progressive force within NATO, a view endorsed by Willy Brandt and indirectly supported by a much-publicized *Wall Street Journal* editorial that rejected Spain's conditions for continued NATO membership. (González had said that Spain would enter NATO only on condition that there be no nuclear arms on Spanish territory, the U.S. troop presence be reduced, and Spain would, like France, hold political, not military, membership.)

The opponents of NATO countered by saying simply that neutrality is a fine thing in a nuclear-armed, bilateral world. A neutral Spain, they argued, would have greater influence in Europe than a Spain tied to a U.S.-dominated NATO. Leaders of the peace movements in northern Europe flocked in to endorse what they hoped would be a precedent. "It is important as an example for other countries that Spain proves it is able to leave the blocs," said Petra Kelly, the Green party leader who came to Madrid with a letter supporting a "no" vote on NATO signed by 13 ex-generals of NATO countries.

The left had more difficulty rebutting PSOE's economic arguments for NATO membership.

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Spain is currently involved in eight joint weapon ventures with other NATO members. Losing that share of NATO's industrial pie, the González government successfully showed, would cost Spain heavily—something her 22 percent unemployed could not bear. Spaniards also feared direct economic retaliation by the United States. Spain had a taste of that in 1984 when the Department of Defense opted to buy a new, untested British transport plane instead of the well-clocked Spanish Avicor, an unexpected decision that followed President González's much publicized embrace of Fidel Castro during the Cuban leader's state visit to Spain. (After the NATO vote word came from Washington that the Avicor would again be purchased, though by another branch of the military.) This time around, the fear arose that Spain's vital shoe industry would lose its U.S. market to Brazil. The anti-NATO campaign tried unsuccessfully to counter such rumors by saying American capital never let politics interfere with profit.

THOUGH SPAIN'S FRAIL ECONOMY provided the Socialists with a strong argument during the NATO referendum, in the context of domestic politics the economic situation takes on another edge. In the last couple of years Spain's seven largest banks have tallied record profits, unemployment has continued to climb, and President González has begun to clash with Nicolás Redondo, secretary general of the socialist trade union, General Union of Workers (UGT). Redondo, dissatisfied with PSOE's course, has moved to the left. He claims the Socialists are following neoliberal economic policies and, in the name of modernity, are willing to trade unemployment for a high-tech economy. (Redondo also abstained from endorsing PSOE's position on NATO.)

The governing Socialists claim in response that both the UGT and Spain's Communist and largest union, Workers Commissions (CCOO), haven't really confronted the current economic crisis. The unions, goes this PSOE reasoning, should turn their attention to the new industrial relations that the new technology demands and work on providing services for their affiliated workers. But Redondo, invoking the example of Sweden, says Spanish unions should be involved in the government's economic planning and not go into political opposition over issues of wages and labor law, the line taken by the more conservative construction sectors of UGT.

Redondo has found reason for optimism. He believes that PSOE will change its economic policies because the party's economic experts get their inspiration from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Early in 1985 the IMF said, for the first time, that the liberal economic solutions of the United States cannot automatically be translated to a European context since Europe would not be able to withstand—politically or economically—the resulting increase in unemployment.

REDONDO IS ALSO ENCOURAGED by a new leftist trend within PSOE. He thinks that support for González's brand of socialism is eroding and that the party will begin a process of self-criticism at its next congress. At that time PSOE will, Redondo hopes, be able to "free itself of some adventurers who have joined the Socialist family in recent years." (After PSOE came to power in 1982 many center and a few Communist politicians experienced a socialist conversion that cynical Spain observed with delight.) This trade unionist is not to be taken lightly, for it was he who stage-managed the 1974 coup that put Felipe González at the helm of PSOE.

All this said, it would be wrong to paint González as a mere opportunist and the PSOE as a circus of ideological chameleons. Spain's forty-four year-old president shares nothing with Thatcher, Kohl, Chirac, or Reagan. In the context of European socialism González is on the left-center. His best friend and mentor within the Socialist International was Olof Palme. He supports the Nicaraguan revolution and opposes U.S. intervention.

Furthermore, many PSOE activists, though they may hem and haw on a few issues like NATO, strongly defend the party's piecemeal approach as the only strategy that can bring lasting change to a country that until ten years ago was politically fascist and economically corrupt and inefficient. To move faster, these socialists argue, would throw both the economy and the body politic into turmoil, give the right a political opening, and threaten what progress has been made. PSOE's left critics can further be countered by saying that they started their political careers by fighting fascism and, like the right, have not psychologically adapted to the staid politics of the new democracy. Besides, there is a new spirit in Spain that dates from October 1982.

While domestic policy and foreign strategy divide party and nation, new Spain is united by—and

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now noted for—its quality of public life. The Socialists' cultural policies have been an undisputed success.

The world of art and letters in Spain is traditionally the domain of the middle class. But now, as a matter of public policy, the arts in Spain are accessible to everyone, unflaggingly promoted and consequently less and less confined to the highly educated. National television devotes five minutes of each half-hour newscast to museum exhibits, concerts, dance, theater, or street festivals. Museums are free and tickets for the performing arts—all subsidized—are cheap. Arts policy debate centers on to what extent writers should be subsidized by the government and whether some of the money spent on the "ethereal arts"—street spectacles and neighborhood festivals—might be better used supporting the lasting works of material artists.

In the left-leaning *El País*, Spain's largest paper, the culture pages follow the political news and regularly outnumber both sports and the economy and labor sections. Opposite the editorial page, instead of the thoughts of packaged pundits, are essays by Spanish and Latin American intellectuals. Spain's intellectuals are accepted as leaders of policy debates. Antonio Gala, an immensely popular playwright who is openly gay—a fact given no mention in the Spanish press—was the official spokesperson for the anti-NATO campaign. During the weeks leading up to the referendum all of Spain's well-known philosophers, historians, novelists and poets broadcast their views on the issue.

Since the Civil War, Spain's artists and intellectuals have been active in left politics. As a result the relations between the intelligentsia and the working class are good.

Value-heavy distinctions between the fine, popular and traditional arts are beginning to dissolve in Spain. It sometimes seems that every other young person you meet is willing to talk about their *Sevillana* (flamenco) lessons—these days a resurrected Spanish passion—and *la movida*, a loosely defined, post modernist cultural movement whose arena is the street.

What Spaniards lack in economic security is, to a certain extent, made up for by the richness of a public life that absorbs the pressures of the material world. Most Spaniards' street life is an extension of their home life. And thanks to *la movida* the street is where everyone wants to be.

One of PSOE's 1982 campaign posters, drawn by a famous Spanish artist, depicted Madrid's Retiro Park turned into what one supposed was a Spanish paradise—happy people enjoying a sunny day in a beautiful park. The poster had no words, just the fist and rose emblem on a kite soaring in the blue sky. That scene has become more real than anyone expected. The Retiro now has four public pavilions whose exhibitions in the past have included subjects such as modern British art, the history of the Inquisition (formerly a taboo subject), rare tropical birds and, recently, scale models of Madrid's public plaza reconstruction projects that help explain the chaos people find as they try to travel across town. Nor is Madrid's Retiro unique. Each city and small town in Spain has its equivalent park. Each has its own center-city reclamation projects.

La movida, however, takes on its fullest colors at night when cafés spill into such Madrid streets as Malasana, Huertas and Fernando Sexto. When the weather is warm the *terrazas* (outdoor cafés) overflow with folks spending their nonworking hours in the company of friends and surrounded by strangers with whom they share the merriment or outrage at whatever spectacle breaks into the night. *Madriz Me Mata* (Madrid [colloq.] Kills Me) is one of the *la movida* slogans of the capital. This night scene is repeated throughout Spain, though to a lesser extent. The *la movida* in Galicia, the rural Celtic province in the northeast, is now known for its avant-garde fashion and modern music.

This dusk-to-dawn revelry of *la movida* is not beyond criticism.

Some critics say that *la movida* is connected with the nation's high unemployment. Many unemployed, this argument goes, live with their parents, spend what little money they have in the cafés where they stay all night, not having to worry about getting up for work. Others say that *la movida* is largely peopled by the employed, and for that reason Spanish workplaces move slowly in the morning.

Still other critics lament the fact that *la movida* keeps people from reading as they once did. Soon, goes this argument, Spain will be full of successful Socialists reading adult comics on the subway. These critics suspect that *la movida* was invented by aspiring artistic types whose only gift was a flair for publicity and whose main ability is to get money from PSOE bureaucrats who want to promote

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Spain. They point to the government's pushing the *la movida* image with an international advertising campaign that toasts Madrid as the only city in the world where it is easy to order dinner at four in the morning.

Still, even these critics will admit there is no other country in Europe where they would consider living, and that, well, *la movida*'s postmodern image makers have, whatever their motive, produced a revived cultural atmosphere.

The new Spain enters its second decade as a country with economic maladies, political health, and a blooming cultural life. People believe that change will come and that it can be on democratic terms. If the thirty-seven years in which they suffered fascist rule left Spaniards a positive legacy, it is a communal interest in street-level politics, an appreciation of the importance of cultural freedom and integrity, and, with old Spain's passing, a feeling of national regeneration. □

George Jochnowitz

Xiaoping, ni hao!

I had the pleasure to be a foreign expert at Hebei University in 1984. The opportunity to live in Baoding, to get to know a city I had never even heard of, and to meet Chinese teachers and students was an experience I shall treasure forever. The people I met in China include some of the best friends I have in the world.

Even before I went to Hebei University, I was an admirer of Chinese culture. Before I set foot in the People's Republic of China, I had negative views about China's political system, which I considered totalitarian. The longer I stayed there, the more I grew to love the country and the people. And the fonder I grew of the Chinese people, the more negative I became about the country's political structure. This did not happen because I learned so many bad things about China's government while I was there. On the contrary, I discovered more positive features than I had ever expected to find. My bad feelings about China's system increased while I was in China because the totalitarianism was no longer an abstraction—it was happening to my friends.

I had not known to what extent China was changing until I learned it from my colleagues and students in Baoding. Friends pointed to the wheat growing in the fields east of the city and told us that before the recent agricultural reforms, wheat did not grow so tall, nor did fields look so beautiful. This sounded a bit unlikely, but upon my return to the United States, I read in newspapers that in 1984 China produced more wheat than ever before in history. Young teachers told us that when they were students in Hebei University, the food in the student dining rooms was neither as good nor as plentiful as now. But my very presence in China was an example of the biggest change of all. China was opening up, no longer afraid to let foreign experts teach its students.

The changes dated from 1976, when Mao died and the Cultural Revolution ended. Most of the people I got to know well at Hebei University sooner or later told me a Cultural Revolution horror story, usually a personal one or one involving an immediate relative. The experience of being in China and hearing about nightmare after nightmare reminded me of being in Israel, where so many people have personally survived the Holocaust. The nature of the horrors in question is quite different; the experience of a country where so many people have lived through something so terrible is the same.

I was at first surprised that Chinese citizens felt free to speak with such emotion about something

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that had happened to them after Liberation, as everyone calls the revolution of 1949. I wondered whether China had free speech. It soon became clear that what I was hearing was not only the heartfelt sentiment of those telling me their histories but also the official position of the Chinese government. What I never came across was a person who thought something good might have come from the Cultural Revolution. Although I will grant that there is indeed nothing positive to be said about that tragic decade, there must be someone somewhere in China who is still in favor of Mao's policies. There certainly are Americans—not very many, but one can find them—who think the Cultural Revolution was a good idea. If China had free speech, one could find Chinese with similar opinions.

THE GANG OF FOUR IS OFFICIALLY BLAMED for all the bad things that took place during this period. Once, while teaching my Introduction to Linguistics course, during a discussion of euphemism and taboo, I asked my students whether *Gang of Four* was a euphemism for *Chairman Mao*. The students were plainly embarrassed by my question, and finally one young woman said, "Oh, no!" But the embarrassment, I think, was simply created by the classroom situation. Outside of class, it was not at all unusual to hear Mao blamed for what had happened. After all, there had been no Gang of Four in 1966. As far as I can make out, the official policy on this question is that Mao was indeed responsible for all the bad things that happened in China between 1966 and 1976, but that Mao was nevertheless a great leader who should be admired for the success of his revolution. Whether or not this is indeed what Chinese people are supposed to think, it seemed to me that it is what they do in fact think.

NO ONE IN CHINA EVER SUGGESTED TO ME THAT THE Cultural Revolution had anything to do with the ideology of the state. The Chinese insist that this period had no philosophical or political underpinning. In 1966, everyone in China said that the Cultural Revolution was a practical application of Marxist theory. Yet today, everyone in China maintains that it was nothing more than the personal mistake of a single man.

And now another man guides the country. If I were to speak to him I would say:

Xiaoping, ni hao:
(Dear Xiaoping:)

You, more than anyone else, have been trying to create a China that will not be plagued by the disorder and destruction of a second Cultural Revolution. I am amazed and delighted by the reforms you have initiated. At the same time, I am grieved by the resignation of Hu Yaobang, whose voice was the boldest and liveliest among China's leaders. Since China is a country I have lived in, it is not merely another place to me; it is another home. The thought that ideological turmoil might one day return to China is as troubling to me as if I were Chinese myself. If victims are once again marched through the streets wearing signs and dunce caps, they will not be strangers but people I know and love. That is why I am so concerned that you succeed in your efforts to make China a place where people will "seek truth from facts." And that is why I worry when Chinese people tell me that the Cultural Revolution was an aberration. He who does not learn from history is condemned to repeat it.

China is structured so as to enforce another reign of terror. The foreign language department at Hebei University has its academic deans, its administrators, and its party deans. So does every other department; every work unit in China has its professional leaders and its party leaders. There are neighborhood committees to make sure that government control extends to every aspect of life. The party's hand is everywhere. Changing leaders is not enough. Sooner or later the officials you have appointed will themselves retire. No one today has any idea who will replace them. The danger is not so much the people at the top as it is the structure itself—a structure that was designed to control not only acts but thought.

People in China speak eagerly and freely to foreigners. It is a trait that added to the pleasure of my life there. In fact, it sometimes seemed that conversations with foreigners were more open than among the Chinese themselves. On two separate occasions, and in two very different places, total strangers approached us on trains. The first one initiated a conversation by pointing to a slightly disorderly scene of people shoving to get better seats on the train. "Do you see that rudeness?" he asked in English. "That is the

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result of our revolution." He did not say "Cultural Revolution." He had been waiting for the opportunity to meet some anonymous foreigners, who had never seen him before and never would again. He wanted to tell us about all the bad things that had happened to him. The second stranger began by saying, "It wasn't the Gang of Four. It was Chairman Mao himself." Both of these men wanted very much our sympathetic understanding. Their stories were still a novelty to us, and were no doubt boring to other Chinese. But we could offer something in addition to our sympathy—security. We would never use their words against them. I don't know whether Chinese people today can get into trouble if their friends or relatives report them to the authorities for expressing negative views of communism or of the party. Even if this no longer occurs, it remains a threat—it may happen again, and the words one utters today may be dangerous in the future.

Once someone asked me directly, "Is it true that in America friendships exist only for economic reasons?" I was offended. To begin with, the question implied that citizens of capitalist countries are somehow less than human—that one must be a communist to enjoy something so basic as friendship. Second, friendships in China may indeed be cultivated so that one can get in through the "back door" (*hou mer*). Third, in China friend turned against friend, child against parent, husband against wife when the party demanded it. Fourth and most important, the question showed that its asker had been deliberately and successfully misinformed; he believed, as most people in China seem to, that human beings are kinder and less selfish in a communist society.

Perhaps there will one day be a Marxist state that is not brutal. If there is, you, Xiaoping, will have played a part in its creation. But there is a step you have not as yet taken. You have not made the state less threatening. The apparatus of political education still exists. The right to criticize officials or policy in China still has not real content, since one may not criticize anything basic.

The source of wealth is not labor but intelligence. A beaver works very hard, but he cannot create wealth. He lacks imagination and originality, those essentially human qualities. The quantity of labor is a minor factor; its quality is what is important. That is why China is working to achieve the Four Modernizations: agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense. But a fifth modernization—education—is the key to the other four. Education depends in turn on freedom of inquiry and access to information. To the extent that these do not exist, education is limited, even thwarted. When I taught at Hebei University, I was very favorably impressed with the brightness and industry of my students. But there was one aspect of my experience that left a negative impression. I directed fourteen senior theses on various British and American novels. They were generally quite bad, not because of the students' failings, but because there were two major gaps in their education: they had not been taught how to do research and they had never learned how to talk about literature. These were good students. But education in China is not designed to produce researchers, outside of science, or thinkers. No doubt China can afford to live without good literary critics. China fears that literary critics will turn into political critics. That is true. But what China needs more than anything else is good political critics.

Thirty-six years of controlling thought has taken its toll. The Chinese people are not simply afraid. They have lost the habit of thinking about basic political questions. The brain, like a muscle, needs to be exercised or it will atrophy. The Chinese no longer know how to ask political questions. If a whole nation persists in thinking that the Cultural Revolution was in no way the result of China's political philosophy, then that whole nation is suffering from brain damage. A brain-damaged nation can never be prosperous because it can never be fully educated.

Today China is undertaking bold new policies without much concern about their ideological content. That is an extraordinary development. But China persists in teaching its children that nothing matters but ideology. College students still take courses in Marxism every semester. Billboards with political slogans still are found everywhere. When dogma clashes with fact, dogma wins. The brain damage is being perpetuated, and the danger of another outbreak of ideological fanaticism remains. But the student demonstrations that began in December of 1986 show that in spite of everything, thought can triumph over dogmatism.

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China has no established, orderly way to change governments. The only way the Gang of Four could be smashed was by their arrest. Instability has been a chronic problem. Mao created and institutionalized instability. His regime was stable in only one way—its longevity. For a political system to be strong and stable, criticism must be built into it. The press must have an adversary relationship with the government. Hostile statements about the state are not a threat; they are a necessity. The more a nation tolerates and even encourages dissent, the stronger it is.

A remarkable story appeared in the October 23, 1985, issue of the English-language *China Daily*. Quoting a news item in the previous day's *People's Daily*, it said, among other things, "Marxist theory should be studied as a science rather than a religion. . . . The most important task in China today is to build socialism with distinct Chinese characteristics, and a high degree of civilization and democracy." The fact that this statement appeared in *People's Daily* is one of the most encouraging pieces of news I have seen in recent times. If Marxism is to be considered a science and not a religion, it must then be subject to scientific scrutiny and dispassionate evaluation. If such a thing were to happen, China would for the first time in its history become a free country.

The difference between communism and capitalism is really not a very important one. America is not quite capitalist, nor is China entirely communist. But the distinction between totalitarianism and freedom is essential. Only freedom can lead to progress, because progress needs free thought in order to exist. And only freedom can lead to internal harmony, because a free society is not endangered by dissent.

I wish you a long, healthy, successful life. □

To Our Contributors:

A few suggestions:

(1) Be sure to keep a copy of your ms—the mails aren't always reliable. And please remember that we can't return articles unless they're accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

(2) Please don't write to ask whether we're interested in such and such an article—it makes for useless correspondence. Look at our last few issues to see if your idea fits in. Or take a chance and send us your article.

(3) Type your ms *double-spaced*, with *wide* margins. Check all your figures, dates, names, etc.—they're the author's responsibility.

(4) Notes and footnotes should also be typed double-spaced, on a *separate* sheet. As we're not an academic journal, we prefer that they, wherever possible, be dropped altogether or worked into the text.

(5) We're usually quick in giving editorial decisions. If there's a delay, it's because a few editors are reading your article.

(6) Please bear with us—we have accumulated quite a backlog of material, and you may have to wait for a few issues before you see your article in print.

THE EDITORS □

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José Miguel Oviedo

Peru: Can This Nation Save Itself?

A Reform Government Faces a Harrowing Multitude of Problems

LIMA

Peru is a country that has undergone dramatic changes in the last twenty years, and some of these have taken a sad toll on both social and political institutions. Basically, the country was not prepared for such changes, and as a result the very fabric of Peruvian society has been weakened to an extent that can be considered dangerous, perhaps explosive. The reality produced by so much improvisation has an incoherent quality; it is both archaic and modern, capitalistic and communitarian (in name at least), aristocratic and populist, Western and Indian, violent and peaceful.

A description of this kind may perhaps fit more than one twentieth-century Latin American nation, but in Peru these internal contradictions have become acute, almost catastrophic. Perhaps the outcome of the profound crisis in which the whole continent finds itself will depend on how the "Peruvian case" is resolved. Peruvians have lived for so long on the razor's edge that they have learned resignation, and a certain amount of suspicion; the changes and upsets going on around them are received with a sort of ironic indifference, a sort of "Things are bad, but they could get worse" reaction. There is hardly ever any room for hope, but they never become hopeless. What surprises the visitor to the Peru now led by President Alan García Perez and his APRA party (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana), is that people are slightly more optimistic than they were, a state of affairs unimaginable only two years ago.

Military Rule and Democracy

THE CHANGE MAY BE MORE PSYCHOLOGICAL than real, and it may be only transitory, but it is clearly perceptible; the new ingredient is Alan García, known by his followers as "Alan," and as "Crazy Horse" by his detractors. To explain this, some recapitulation of recent history is needed. Several times over the past twenty years or so the recurring (and regressive) feature of Peruvian politics has been confirmed: changes have taken place with a circularity that seems to diminish their effect. Between 1968 and 1980 Peru was ruled by a "revolutionary" military government that had forcibly removed from power the then president, Fernando Belaúnde Terry. Belaúnde had taken over the leadership in 1963, but his political career stemmed from the 1950s, when he opposed another military dictatorship, the eight-year old regime of General Manuel A. Odría. When the military regime took over in 1968, with General Velasco Alvarado at its head, the country saw another manifestation of the law that moves Peruvian politics from the pole of military rule to that of timid experiments in civil democracy. At the same time it seemed impossible that Belaúnde, whose government had foundered on political indecision and administrative inefficiency, could ever regain his popular appeal. In contrast to the "modernizing" thrust and the aggressively populist language of the military (especially in the regime's early days), Belaúnde represented the past, old Peru ready for burial.

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But in this country the past dies hard and illusions soon disappear. Despite its vaguely socialistic bias, Velasco Alvarado's leadership soon turned into typical militaristic bossism, intolerant and scornful of civilian society, and eventually suffocated in corruption and provincial nationalism. A serious illness first curtailed and then obliterated the enormous power Velasco Alvarado had amassed; his last few months at the helm were a time of obvious disintegration; the "socialist" dream turned into an authoritarian nightmare, and reality proved more complex than the grandiose plans the regime had thought up to control it. Velasco Alvarado was removed from power by his own military men, and was replaced by Francisco Morales Bermúdez, whose stated mission was to "continue the revolution," but who in fact ran the government purely in order to survive until he could find an "honorable" way back to the barracks. And that is what he did. The "revolutionary" message had by now lost all its charm, and democracy, which the military had rejected as the cause of all the country's evils, once again excited the hopes of the electorate. The result of the 1980 elections was a perfect example of the swing of the pendulum: the belittled and now elderly Belaúnde returned to power. It was an overwhelming triumph, which forced the military into the most uncomfortable situation of all—that of handing over the presidential sash to the very man it had ousted eleven years before.

Belaúnde is an exemplary nineteenth-century democrat. Gentlemanly, honest, enlightened, scrupulously respectful of other people's ideas, a dreamer entranced with the physical grandeur of his country, his vision of it is "positivist"! For him Peru is its roads, its trees, its dams, the humble but noble villages of the remote interior where time seems to have stood still—an earlier world than the confused, urgent reality that is the country today. His second government (1980–1985) was impeccably democratic in form, but regressive and insensitive to the needs of a society that had evolved more rapidly than he. In the last year of his stewardship, the technical shortcomings of his party's bureaucrats (Acción Popular), and the incoherence and weakness of its economic policies led to a general feeling of hopeless disarray and total national paralysis. Between 1980 and 1985 the gross national product dipped to −14 percent, inflation exceeded 150 percent, and wages lost between 40 percent and 65 percent of their buying power. Peru was adrift in a tense, somber atmosphere that bespoke real catastrophe. One was aware of an all-pervasive despair, felt by the shantytown dweller and the formerly prosperous industrial entrepreneur alike. The ship was leaking everywhere, and people were thinking in terms of mere survival, while the threat of repayment of the foreign debt (14 billion dollars) and the demands of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) loomed on the horizon. In the grip of circumstances it could not control, and of economic forces far greater than those of its government, the country seemed to be heading towards apocalypse.

IT WOULD BE A GROSS EXAGGERATION to imply that this panorama has disappeared, since the facts and figures still imply danger. But a new factor has unexpectedly appeared, and has given heart to the collective illusions: a young man (thirty-six years old when he came to power), charming and charismatic, daring and dynamic, who uses a different political vocabulary and who likes to act without intermediaries; a born leader, truly liked by the people, who aspires to continental leadership. It is paradoxical that this new figure belongs to APRA, the oldest political party in Peru (founded in 1924 by Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre), which only six years ago was close to schism and even dissolution. One can convey a sense of the importance of APRA by saying that the party's internal history has been decisive in the political history of contemporary Peru—a history of frustrations and deferred promises. More than a party, it is a movement with pluralistic social origins, a vague ideology, and contradictory strategies; like Argentinian Peronism it is a sort of nationalistic populism with right and left wings between which power swings depending on how the wind blows and how Haya de la Torre's theses are interpreted at any given time.

If APRA has been faithful to anything it is

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to its anti-imperialism, which sufficed to win it the institutional enmity of the armed forces. They saw a greater danger in the Aprista movement than in communism, or perhaps its most sinister ally. The Army-APRA quarrel has continued, with variations, since the 1930s, and effectively ensured a "veto" against any Aprista candidate for the presidency. In order to survive periods of persecution, APRA had recourse to a variety of maneuvers, including alliances with its natural enemies, the oligarchic sectors. So the APRA now in power is a party whose experience of power was almost nonexistent: it represented approximately a third of the voting population, but for half a century its opponents had managed to block its path. An Aprista president was almost an invitation to a military coup.

The fact that Alan García could survive as a candidate, win the election with 53 percent of the votes, and actually take power, indicates a significant change in the relationship of Peru's political forces, and an obvious loss of prestige for the preaching of the military after its doubtful "revolutionary" adventure of 1968. Even APRA's most bitter civilian enemies, the Miró Quesada family, which owns *El Comercio*, the country's oldest and most prestigious newspaper, have brought to an end a history of mutual misunderstandings and hatreds worthy of the Montagues and Capulets, all of which originated in the political crime of Antonio Miró Quesada de la Guerra in the 1930s that was attributed to a militant Aprista. After suffering expropriation during the Velasco Alvarado era, the Miró Quesadas face the fact of an Aprista government with the conviction that they cannot "go on imposing a family problem on their readers and on the country," as *El Comercio* editor Alejandro Miró Quesada has acknowledged. The new Aprista government marks the culmination of a process of reconciliation and a healing of old national wounds.

But neither should one overstate the case: Alan García's easy victory shows only that Peru has become "Alanista" rather than "Aprista." Because of his comparative youth, the new president seems unconnected to the ins and outs of the party's shadiest eras; he is more acceptable to the army than the leaders of the Aprista "old guard," and he is less displeasing to many non-Aprista voters who have always feared the party's demagogic tendencies. Alan García emerged as one of the new breed of Apristas, able to renew the party structure while respecting democratic give and take; he symbolized this phase of an APRA brought to heel by the hard lessons of the past and present. During his campaign the candidate presented himself insistently as a civilized, modern reformer, a true Latin American social democrat, modeling himself closely on Felipe González in post-Franco Spain. It is hard to decide if he really is a social democrat or not. As a movement APRA has always spoken with many voices at once (there are even two Hayas, two theorists engaged in a mutual debate running according to the historical period one looks at). But now the party speaks with the unmistakable voice of Alan García, who has committed himself to the political alignment of the party. It could be said that there is a social democratic APRA, but that there are also other APRAs, currently dormant, but waiting for the moment when the president's leadership ceases to be viable or wears itself out. The country's political compass seems also to point in his direction, which explains the president's personal success. November 1986 provided a case in point.

At that time the first municipal elections under an Aprista government were held. The fact that a vote for the mayoral candidates in Lima and elsewhere could be construed as a sign of support for or rejection of the leadership of Alan García little more than a year after his taking power gave a markedly national character to elections usually of only local interest. Because of the large number of voters, the Lima election was crucial. The three candidates in this race represented clearly defined constituencies. The candidate of the United Front, a somewhat unstable coalition of the Marxist left, was Alfonso Barrantes Lingán, the incumbent mayor and a person with strong backing in working-class sectors. Luis Bedoya Reyes, mayor twice before, was the candidate of the right-of-center Popular Christian Party. Jorge del Castillo was APRA's candidate. At the beginning of the campaign, Barrantes's

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victory seemed inevitable, so much so that running against him was seen as an undesirable "sacrifice." Later, the field began to even out, thanks to the pull of Bedoya, the most experienced of the three. The most obscure and least known was, in fact, Del Castillo, who furthermore had to overcome the stigma of being the "official" candidate.

Alan García threw all his political weight behind Del Castillo, thus producing great consternation among the other parties' supporters, who contrasted his attitude with Belaúnde's impartiality during his presidency. For the Aprista leader to show support was not technically illegal, though it could be considered unsporting. A short while before the elections, it was thought in some circles that the president had "burned" Del Castillo by taking him under his wing: the voters would reject the kind of "totalitarian" control the government would then have in the capital. (This was the opinion of Francisco Igartua, editor of *Oiga*, the journal most bitterly opposed to APRA.)

The opposite occurred. Unexpectedly Del Castillo won, showing that Alan García could use his popularity to endorse a candidate without alienating public opinion. It was a close but meaningful victory. The losers did not resign themselves to defeat, and demanded that the whole process be annulled on account of certain irregularities, their immediate goal being to prevent the president from enjoying the fruits of this vicarious triumph. After two months and many disputes, the Electoral Court declared Del Castillo the winner; as the opposition has appealed the official results, the situation on that front promises to remain tense.

The expectations that have grown up around Alan García have won him the interest and support of technocrats, social researchers, and political scientists who are not Apristas, including, and this is quite surprising, some of the people who advised (and committed themselves to) Velasco Alvarado's government. A significant case is that of Carlos Franco, who was part of the SINAMOS (*Sistema Nacional de Apoyo a la Movilización Social*) team in charge of social mobilization during the military regime, and who now works with a group of technocrats studying and analyzing for the president economic and social questions of major importance. According to Franco the group represents different degrees of leftist thought which "it would be difficult to identify with any party inside or outside the country," even APRA. These are people trying to bring about profound political change in the country, more profound even than anything presented by APRA during the electoral campaign. Organized within CEDEP (Center for Studies of Development and Participation), with financial backing from European groups dedicated to social change, they publish studies that have a limited circulation but influence specialists.

Foreign Debt

THIS GROUP AND OTHERS like it have given technical endorsement to what is in fact the most daring formula suggested by a Latin American leader to pay off foreign debt, namely to liquidate only the 10 percent of this debt that is balanced by exports. At first it was unclear if the 10 percent referred to the whole of the Peruvian debt, but it was later determined that it referred specifically to medium- and long-term debt. During the first months of 1985 Peru was assigning from 20 to 25 percent of the income from exports to pay off this debt; in a world economy unfavorable to the country's interests because of the notorious decline of the international price of metals, this imposed a burden that the national economy could bear only with considerable difficulty. "When we calculated the net flow of foreign currency, or the rate of what comes in and what goes out, we found that Peru would have been exporting capital for three years," Franco observes. This outflow of some 600 million dollars annually conveys a sense of the country's distressing economic hemorrhage.

Something had to be done to avoid collective suicide. On July 28th, 1985, after his inauguration as president, Alan García revealed a plan of economic recuperation the key points of which were: first, foreign enterprises would not repatriate profits for two years; second, the payments made by Peruvian capitalists against the debts they had contracted previously were to be regulated; and third, all these savings would constitute part of the 10 percent to pay off the foreign debt.

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Thus far, the emergency plan seems adequate. The problem is that, in the opinion of financial technicians and government staff, projections of the growth of the foreign sector during the next few years suggest that in 1987 Peru will not be able to pay even this 10 percent. Peru's tough choice is either not to pay back the debt at all (a step the government has resisted up to this point) or to pay only a small portion. On the domestic front this corresponds to another, even tougher, choice: to reactivate the economy or to let it founder and collapse completely. In 1986, for which a growth of 6 percent had been forecast, Peruvian industry grew almost 10 percent, which is a record; agricultural production, which had been close to 0 percent, also showed a modest increase. But these improvements are threatened by the shortage of foreign currency to pay for imports, necessary if the nation's industry is to turn itself around and resolve the problem of the lack of raw material and capital goods; in this sense the dependency of the industrial apparatus is almost total. On the other hand, domestic investment is inhibited by the very insecurity of the industrialists vis-à-vis the new government and its credit politics.

After he had been in power for a year, Alan García decided to meet with the leaders of industry and lay the choices before them: either their sector and the government could reach an agreement, or they would be expropriated. One of the conditions for an agreement was that national industry use domestic raw material; another implied a change in the pricing structure: the profit margin had to be figured into the volume of the product, not into its price; another had to do with the regulation of the foreign currency to avoid the inflationary spiral that had taken the country, in little more than ten years, from 50 *soles* to 14,500 *soles* to the dollar. This forced the treasury to replace the *sol* with the *inti* (*inti* means *sol* [sun] in Quechua) as a new monetary unit.

For the person in the street this agreement, accepted by the industry, has meant slightly higher salaries and relatively stable prices, which have increased consumption in almost all sectors, especially food and textiles. And to the observer the economic condition seems like that of a gravely ill person who at least is not getting worse. The situation is certainly not good, but the vertical plunge has become a somewhat slower downward slide.

What has happened in the housing sector is very interesting. As a result of squatting or of never-resolved law suits, hundreds of thousands of people in Lima live on lots or in property with no titles. The confusion and slowness of the public registries are Kafkaesque, which explains why people have resigned themselves to living in precarious legal situations though they own the real estate in good faith. The result is a huge economic problem: since there are no titles, improvements, investments and all economic activity based on real estate are at a standstill.

The government introduced an innovation—the establishment in the attorney general's office of an ombudsman to take care of claims and complaints specifically related to realty. In six months this office received some three hundred thousand complaints about property titles. In accordance with ideas developed by the Institute of Liberty and Democracy, a private organization under the direction of Hernando de Soto (who has just published a book, entitled *The Other Path*, on the hidden reality of Peru's underground economy), a decree was issued authorizing municipalities to grant titles within 120 days. As a result, there are now some 100,000 people with titles, not by any means perfect, but adequate for all practical purposes such as sale, transfer, or inheritance. It is hardly necessary to point out how much popular support a measure like this must have won for the government.

The growth of production and consumption has no doubt been reinforced by a program of social assistance, PAIT, that creates sources of temporary and emergency work. Since the Constitution grants job security to anyone after three months, businesses try to contract only those new workers who are strictly indispensable, for fear of the economic burdens that arise from having to pay social benefits. For a period of two years, PAIT allows workers to be taken on without job security and at minimum wage. One hundred and forty thousand new jobs have been created in this way in Lima and

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four hundred thousand in the country as a whole, for people who otherwise would have had to resort to delinquency or begging.

Other dramatic moves have been devised to assure the international banking institutions that the will exists to bring about a general reordering of public spending. Running the risk of affecting the interests of the military (which for an Aprista is not to be recommended on principle) and of creating a problem for himself with some European countries, Alan García decided to reduce a purchase of French Mirage airplanes, which had been negotiated by the previous government, from twenty-six planes to twelve. He canceled the purchase of a warship (it was really a navy relic discarded by NATO) that had been reconstructed and fitted out for 240 million dollars in a Dutch shipyard.

According to Luis Alberto Sánchez, vice president of the Republic and the best known intellectual in the party, decisions like these have helped the United States to better understand Peru's position: "Recently," says Sánchez, "I had a profitable conversation that lasted forty-eight minutes with Dr. Shultz in Bogotá. I explained these things to him and received a favorable response that has since been confirmed both on a private and an official level. In fact we were visited by an assessment commission of private banks (after Peru had made a payment of 34 million dollars) that saw what the real situation of the country is. This indicates that there is hope, that our creditors are starting to understand."

And he adds, "Despite the sanctions of the IMF, we still belong to the organization and provide it with 0.33 percent of its capital." (The United States contributes 26 percent.) The 10 percent thesis has clearly politicized the matter of the debt beyond the point at which creditors want to discuss the issue, which for them is strictly financial. Sánchez recognizes that the president's tone was somewhat strident when he presented the idea for the first time and that anti-IMF rhetoric has its dangers. "But now," he says, "there is no aggressive rhetoric; we both have understood."

IT IS ONE OF HISTORY'S ironic lessons that an anti-imperialist party founded in the 1920s must face the urgent demands of a global economy dominated by the laws of capitalism and the play of interests of the great powers. "The sad thing," Sánchez comments philosophically, "is that the instinctive opposition to APRA caused us to lose valuable time in consolidating a democratic way of life. And within the party it had a negative effect on the formation of qualified people: for three or four generations we had had no experience in government." According to Sánchez himself, an important change has taken place in Peru's international politics:

> In contrast to the Third World policies of Velasco Alvarado, who looked for allies in the Arab world and in Africa, ours is a Latin American, specifically a South American policy, based on the reality of a common destiny. Peru was seeking geographically distant allies and forgetting her immediate neighbors. One concrete example of the change in direction is that we are negotiating with Chile to bring about a reciprocal reduction in arms and military spending. A similar negotiation is under way with Ecuador and another with Brazil, with the goal of economic integration.

Guerrilla Violence

PERU'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL problems are made even worse by another factor, terrorist violence. *Sendero Luminoso*, or Shining Path, is one of the oddest subversive groups to be found in today's world. It is a small secret society made up of fanatics and deluded prophets who worship their own archaic theories and apocalyptic actions; ideologically, they follow the teachings of Mao and the now infamous "Gang of Four," but tactically they are closer to Pol Pot and his visceral hatred of progress and the city as manifestations of bourgeois decadence. They are not guerrillas, as is usually assumed; they are messianic cadres who kill and die singing revolutionary hymns. They have more to do with Rasputin and Nostradamus than with Marxism-Leninism. They are the most acute symptom of the ills of a society that has not been able to really modernize itself, and in this sense they are part of the reality of a country that basically ignored the cries of its peasant, Indian culture. Shining Path is a thorn piercing the national consciousness; it appears in the country and in the city as a force bent on avenging grievances never

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attended to. But it also vents its blind ferocity on poor country dwellers, and sacrifices them unhesitatingly in the name of the sanctity of its doctrine. Shining Path feels the same hatred towards the landowner and the wretched peasant who pays it no attention and tries to organize a cooperative or to provide machinery for a farm. The sect comes with no solutions: it simply wants to destroy and to rule over the void it creates.

Shining Path has absolutely no possibility of gaining power and converting Peru into a communist republic along the lines of Cambodia, but its activities cause a constant seepage of lives, money, and forces that further delays the country's recovery. A more recent phenomenon than Shining Path is the even more obscure and mysterious group called Revolutionary Movement Tupac Amaru; it operates mainly in Lima and other cities rather than in the countryside. It has no ties with Shining Path (in fact, they seem to be rivals), and it is run by leaders whom no one knows well. People suspect something very shady in its background, perhaps former police bosses allied with renegade revolutionaries financed by the drug traffic. In the case of Shining Path the striking thing is that there is no proof of any tactical or economic support from any known foreign source: it is a movement that is totally indigenous in origin and opposed to almost all the revolutionary regimes in the world.

These groups keep alive a climate of violence with its painful consequences, but they also pose a moral problem: how can one fight them effectively without falling into the extremes of Argentina's "dirty war"? On the one hand military repression has been unproductive. Despite much publicity and many intense campaigns, the cells of Shining Path and Tupac Amaru are still alive and causing considerable damage that worsens the current economic situation. It is foolish to think they will disappear in the near future: violence is now a substantial part of late-twentieth-century Peruvian political life. On the other hand, repression by the army has produced undeniable excesses and, worse yet, deliberate killings to avenge their own losses or out of sheer frustration at a tough task that has been going on for six years. Amnesty International has publicized and condemned these atrocities. The last and most serious was the killing of some 260 prisoners (some Shining Path members, others only suspects) in a prison in Lima where they had started a protest strike.

Everything is in a state of crisis in Peru, including the judiciary system and the police and military forces, generally poorly trained, corrupt, and also understandably terrified. Terror breeds terror and in the crossfire the innocent fall along with the guilty, leftist students with proven terrorists. The Peruvian Andes are filled with unmarked graves of mutilated and tortured bodies whose murderers are on both sides of the "popular war" unleashed by terrorism; with victims who were mistaken for their aggressors, and with local hatreds that found an outlet under the cover of the antisubversive campaign. There are now thousands of victims, but almost never is anyone found responsible. The very numbers of the dead make it easy to forget them and do nothing.

For the peasants in Ayacucho and other emergency zones, the theme of the foreign debt is utterly Byzantine. For them the issue is simply the survival of a culture whose ancestral norms and strong communal interests (neither rightist nor leftist) have been deeply shaken by the bullets. Changes are noticeable also in those remote villages in the mountains, where the wretched conditions people are used to are now made worse by the barbarous demands of the armed gangs that descend on them touting either revolution or order. If the government (this one or any other) cannot protect the peasants from the brutality of both sides, Peru will soon be (if it is not already) a society shattered into irreconcilable fragments by ritualistic vendettas.

The young government of Alan García must not become conceited over its partial successes. One of the worst traits of Velasco Alvarado's military government was its senseless vainglory, its tendency to a self-congratulation that fostered the illusory image of a country ruled by infallible and wise Caesars. Something of this tendency can be seen in Alan García, fomented by his youth, his enthusiasm, and his innate ambition. He is a man who believes as much in

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symbolic gestures as in concrete actions. Sometimes, especially when he is abroad, he gives in to the temptation to "steal the show." The real basis of the power he enjoys lies in the many dispossessed people whose expectations he himself has stimulated. With the support of these expectations he can renew the broken bond between the country and its government, but they cannot wait for fulfillment indefinitely, and may indeed rebound tragically. Very soon people will begin to demand results which, if not forthcoming, will again generate the cycle of frustrations and lost illusions.

Today's illusions may also be lost unless things are managed prudently and lucidly—with the help of a series of fortunate circumstances. *Something* has been achieved, but the task ahead is immense. The government's strongest temptation is to believe it has already found the solution and snatched the country from the brink. This is the worst crisis Peru has had to navigate in all its history; it is the final phase of a long period of decadence of power that perhaps began before APRA came into being. The country cannot be destroyed by the violence of Shining Path, but it may well be destroyed through lack of realism and self-criticism if this last lesson of history is ignored. The terrible warning of the closing line of García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* may be applied to Peru: it will not have "a second opportunity on earth."

The collective wisdom of a people that has maintained its sense of resignation and tenacity in so many harsh situations keeps alive a saying that is ironic but consoling: "God is Peruvian." Maybe with this in mind, the great poet Cesar Vallejo wrote in 1918: "I was born on a day when God was very, very sick." It could be said that these desolate lines, with such clear echoes of Nietzsche, provide the best description of the current situation—closer to total abandonment than to the miraculous panaceas in which poltiicians frequently indulge.

TRANSLATED BY RACHEL PHILLIPS BELASH □

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André Gorz

(S)He Who Doesn't Work Shall Eat All the Same

Tomorrow's Economy—and Proposals from the Left

1982: The Triumph-Adler typewriter company is on the skids, and its 9,000 employees told that they are about to be laid off.

1983: The company holds one-sixth of the world market for electronic typewriters; its prices are down by 30 percent, and, despite a 20 percent increase in production capacity, it can hardly keep pace with its flow of orders.

***Explanation:** In the space of two years, the firm installed flexible computer-controlled manufacturing systems, i.e. robots, rebuilt its plant, and overhauled its organization. Its assembly line can now produce thirty-eight different models (with as many as thirty variations for each), in any sequence. No more than two hours elapse between the moment when an operator presses the keys that send the parts from an automated storeroom to the automated assembly lines and the moment when the typewriter is checked, packaged, and ready for mailing. Parts that had been manufactured by subcontractors are now produced in the mother factory. Stock never exceeds three days. And though production has increased by 20 percent, manpower has been reduced by 36 percent. Wage costs are down to only 5 percent of total cost.*

Why is this story significant, compared to hundreds of others? Because, for once, the firm has published data on the effects of its transformation; and these facts furnish a response to those who keep doubting that the "microelectronics revolution" entails a *net saving* of both labor and capital. The doubters offer three main arguments:

1. *To manufacture and install robots demands a great deal of work and creates many jobs.*

Think about this for a moment. If the installation of robots were to demand as much labor as it would save, it would not allow any lowering of total wage costs and would have no effect on the level of industrial employment. However, the level has dropped rapidly. In West Germany, the economic recovery of 1983-84 did not prevent the loss of 500,000 industrial jobs, after the recession of 1981-82 had already brought about the loss of 700,000 jobs. When the manufacture and programming of robots is also done by robots, this process will be speeded up even more.[1]

2. *Automated industries consume great quantities of outside services. The lowering of direct industrial employment will be compensated by indirect employment.*

If this argument were true, the total wage cost would be constant, the given firm transferring back to outside workers the wages that have been saved by automation. As we have seen, nothing of the sort has happened.

3. *The microelectronic revolution will boost the demand for goods and especially for services. The result will be a very large number of jobs; just see the U.S.*

This is the point of view advanced by Michel Drancourt and Albert Merlin in their most recent book, *Demain, la croissance*, and by the great ideologue of the business class, Octave Gelinier, in *Le Chômage guéri . . . si nous le voulons*. These authors see prodigious markets opening to "swarming ventures."[2]

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As regards goods, one thinks, of course, of cars that drive themselves; of computerized medical equipment; of domestic robots that do one's cooking, housekeeping, shopping—indeed, one's piano-playing, one's physical training, etc.

As regards services: Gelinier promises that "important enterprises with highly sophisticated management will supply you, at a low fee, the person-to-person services that used to be supplied by individual craftsmen." The industrialized and computerized caterer will replace old-fashioned cooks and lunch rooms; the chain of "express" hairdressers will oust the old hairdressing salons; fast-food restaurants will supplant the local snack bar. Squads of men and women housecleaners will be sent by radio calls from block to block; nursing aides will take care of the ill, the handicapped, and the old at their own homes; infants will be sent to computer-controlled day care centers, etc.

All these developments, which are already in sight, will, according to Gelinier, "put to work the less educated strata of the population," who will get "a modest wage" for a "modest job"; most often this will be temporary, precarious, and part time, for "our society has a growing need for manpower flexibility."

RELEASED FROM DAILY CHORES by computers, robots, and an army of anonymous, modestly paid servants, you are promised that you will have more time for trips to the beauty salon, psychiatric sessions, slimming regimens, cruises, seances of transcendental meditation, plus other personal upper-crust services. One assumes, of course, that you are not among the many "modestly" and "precariously" employed, for that is a different matter entirely. Best not think of it.

But to the point: Where will the money come from for you to afford all these services? Not from the commodity-producing sector, which will be largely staffed by robots and will employ steadily fewer people. According to some U.S. estimates, industry will employ 10 percent of the working population at the end of the century, as compared to 16 percent at present. Thus, the industrial payroll is bound to shrink. Will your money then come from the service sector, and chiefly from person-to-person services? This is what our eminent authors believe.

It's an interesting idea. More than 80 percent of us will earn our living by offering services to others. We will be paying each other for baby-sitting, beauty care, housecleaning, sexual services, etc., each person being specialized in one given activity, the professional exercise of which is to permit him or her to pay for the services of the others. But where is the creation of value in all this? Where is the surplus? Does this not remind you of the famous paradigm of Bertrand de Jouvenel, in which two mothers pay each other for each to care for the other's three children, thereby creating two jobs and upping the GNP by two salaries? John Nevin, president of Firestone Tire and Rubber, made the definitive statement on the subject: "The idea that we can have an economy by selling hamburgers to each other is absurd."

The American economy illustrates this remark perfectly. Of the thirteen million jobs created in ten years, the large majority have been in occupations "at the bottom of the ladder": charwomen and housecleaners, male and female; waiters and waitresses; nursing aides; etc. And for the next ten years, the forecast is, among other data, for 53,000 additional computer programmers as compared to 800,000 additional janitors. "New tertiary jobs" mean, essentially, that millions of men and women will have to compete for the privilege of selling their personal services, often for less than the minimum wage, to those who still have well-paid jobs—and there are fewer and fewer of these. Obviously, this is not a very promising prospect, and even American neoliberals will not pretend that it is.

When the production process requires less and less manpower and distributes less and less in wages, order is in danger—both public order and order in the market economy. As to public order, one need only see what is happening in, say, Liverpool (25 percent unemployed); in Madrid (22 percent unemployed, 50 percent among the under twenty-five age group); or in São Paulo or New York. The market economy threatens to collapse because the volume of

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goods produced grows while the number of solvent people decreases. The evidence forces one to conclude that if we wish to maintain order, we may no longer reserve the right to an income to those citizens only who have jobs, nor even make the level of income dependent on the number of hours worked. Hence the idea of *an income that would be guaranteed to every man and woman independently of work done.*

THIS IDEA WAS BROUGHT UP recently, but with great caution, within the French Socialist party, in the form of a "guaranteed minimum" or a "social minimum." Variations on the idea have been discussed or even implemented for years in North America and throughout Northern Europe—in the Scandinavian countries, Great Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, and, above all, in West Germany, where there is talk of *Grundrecht auf Grundversorgung* (constitutional right to a basic maintenance), or of *Bürgerrecht auf materielle Grundsicherung* (the right of every citizen to a secure subsistence), or of *Recht auf Grundeinkommen* (the right to a basic income).

THE GUARANTEE OF AN INCOME independent of any work has its supporters on the right, left, and in the center. They are in agreement as to the principle: We must break away from an evolution that leads the majority of the population to depend for its livelihood on the labor market. In other words, the right to an income can no longer be the same thing as the right to a wage.

However, as soon as one moves beyond general principles to deal with practical questions as to how to organize society and especially how to distribute work to all those wanting to work, ideas begin to diverge and a right/left cleavage appears that does not correspond to the usual patterns of class analysis. On the right, one finds the upper class, together with its usual allies, plus a significant number of skilled, unionized blue- and white-collar workers. On the left, one finds people that class analysis cannot place, but also militant workers and trade-unionists, who are aware of the dangers of the current developments. Let us examine this a bit more closely.

A Guaranteed Income: Right-Wing Version

IN ITS RIGHT-WING VERSION, the idea of a guaranteed income is as old as the Industrial Revolution itself. It aims to make the growth of unemployment and poverty socially tolerable, for these are considered the inevitable consequences of a free market economy.

This was already the purpose of the Poor Laws, established in Great Britain in the early nineteenth century. They ensured every member of a rural parish a bare subsistence income pegged to the price of bread. Exactly like the idea of a "social minimum" devised by the neoconservatives today (I shall return to this later), the Poor Laws abolished earlier social provisions that had helped the landless workers in rural areas. These workers previously had always had the right to use the commons to raise a bit of grain and some vegetables, and to pasture a few sheep. When communal property was abolished, that right was taken away from them; the commons were distributed to the landowners, and fenced. These steps had a twofold purpose: to develop commercial crops, and to force landless countrypeople to hire themselves out to the owners.

However, the owners had no need to hire a supplementary work force that would be *permanent*. The Poor Laws dispensed them from doing so and, by insuring the survival of the unemployed, freed the owners of all scruple. Even better (or worse): whereas, in the past, the owner had maintained enough men on hand so as not to be short of manpower when it was needed, particularly during harvest times, the Poor Laws permitted owners to replace many of their permanent workers with day laborers hired for the duration of indispensable work, and then send the day laborers home to live on the minimum subsistence that the parish was obliged to give the poor.

One can see the parallel with the present situation. For today, too, employers are eager to keep only a small nucleus of indispensable people on their permanent payroll and to hire or fire at will all the others who, not being part of the permanent personnel, are also excluded from wage agreements, fringe benefits, pension

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plans, and union protection. This greater employers' "freedom" in the utilization of labor presupposes, obviously, the easing of both labor and social legislation. It also assumes that, as with the British day laborers in the early days of industrial capitalism, a minimum subsistence will be guaranteed to the vast numbers of unemployed and half-employed, who, as computerization and robotization gain momentum, will be able to find only occasional jobs—irregular, ungratifying, badly paid, and offering no future. This mass of marginal, vulnerable workers may represent 75 percent of the active population by the year 2000.

For all these reasons, some neoconservatives—notably Milton Friedman—advocate a system that guarantees a subsistence minimum to each citizen, in the form of a "negative income tax." The basic principle is this: If your yearly income is above a given amount (for example, $6,000), you will pay taxes. If your income is sizably less (for instance, $4,000), the IRS will supplement it; the IRS will guarantee you a minimum (for instance, $2,500) if you have no income at all.

According to the ideas of the neoconservatives and of Friedman himself, the introduction of this system should coincide with the abolition of all other forms of social protection: minimum wage, Social Security, compensation for unemployment and illness, dependents' allowances, etc. The compulsory contributions of employees and of employers to Social Security would likewise disappear. Nothing would be allowed to shackle the free play of the labor market. The market would find its "natural balance"—i.e., the price of labor (the wage) would find a level at which labor supply and demand are balanced. Since this level severely risks being below the subsistence minimum, the minimum should be guaranteed to all citizens by a system of negative taxation. As the neoconservatives see it, the guarantee of a subsistence minimum is the basis on which the labor market can function without interference. What it actually does is to permit labor costs to fall so low that a goodly amount of work that would not have been profitable if paid at the normal wage rate can be passed on to people who are simply looking to supplement their guaranteed income and therefore take less. Conversely, when the market price of labor drops too low, the incentive to look for a job flags, and the scarcity of labor supply makes for rising wage rates. That, at least, is the theory.

OBVIOUSLY, THIS REGRESSIVE neoconservative version is not the only one possible. The guarantee of a minimum income can be linked to higher social ideals. For example, it may aim to save society's cohesion via a more expansive version of human rights and human solidarity—this being the view of some Christian Democrats. Or it may free people from the need to sell their labor power by fixing the guaranteed minimum so high as to allow virtually limitless independent activities that are not, properly speaking, economic—this being the view of the libertarians.

The Netherlands are the most advanced country in this regard, for every adult has the right, even if he or she has never worked, to a minimum of 1,000 florins per month (the equivalent of 425 dollars), plus 500 florins per person sharing the same home. Even in the Britain of Margaret Thatcher, an unemployed adult who lives with his or her parents and who has never worked can receive four pounds per day (about six dollars) for as long as needed.

Nevertheless, whatever the size of the guaranteed minimum income, its fundamental defect remains: It leads to a split-up of society, to a dual stratification that can go so far as a South-Africanization of social relations. The guaranteed minimum income continues to be the wage of social exclusion, for it consolidates a system dominated by capitalist relations of production and by what I have called the "working elite." The guaranteed minimum is a way of accepting this split-up, and of making it more tolerable.

A Guaranteed Income: Left-Wing Version

THE LEFT-WING VERSION of the guaranteed income is radically different. It does not consider the growth of unemployment inevitable or acceptable. It starts from the fact that, as the amount of labor that society needs will keep diminishing, liberation from socially necessary labor is the only sensible goal. As a conse-

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quence, the labor savings implied in technological changes should be distributed in such a way that *all men and women can work, but work less and less without loss of income.*

Basically, what differentiates the policy of the left from that of the right is that the left refuses the vision of a society divided into a class of permanently employed full-time workers and another of people excluded from "working society." It is not the guarantee of an income independent of work that will be at the core of the left's program, but the indissoluble linking of the right to an income and the right to work. Every citizen must have the right to a normal standard of living, but also the possibility (the right and the duty) to contribute to society the equivalent in work to what he or she consumes.

That's the stipulation of membership of every man and woman in society—his or her full citizenship. Right and duty are always linked: my right is the duty of others toward me, it implies my duty toward them. As a member of society, I have the right to demand the guarantee of a normal standard of living, but being a member of society also means that society has rights over me. It is by its rights over me that society recognizes me as a member. Society needs me; it will not treat me as a supernumerary to whom it gives alms so that it may sleep well at night. The right to have a job, the duty to work, and the right of citizenship are inextricably linked.

Ergo, from a left-wing point of view, the essential thing is not the guarantee of an income independent from work; it is the guarantee of an income that does not decline as fast as the average work time. *It is not from work itself but from socially necessary work time that income must become independent.*

The speed and extent of possible reductions of work time are frequently underestimated. In Western Europe, the "normal" work time is currently about 1,700 hours per year for people who are working full time. In France, in 1984, the normal work time earned the average household a disposable income of 15,000 francs per family per month (about $2300). If all the socially necessary work could be spread among all those who wish to work, the annual work time would drop to 1,350 or 1,500 hours per year (assuming a 10 or 20 percent rate of unemployment).

Assuming that the French GNP will keep growing 2 percent annually (a somewhat optimistic assumption), and that the annual rise of productivity will not exceed 3.5 percent to 4 percent (a somewhat pessimistic assumption), the quantity of necessary labor will then diminish by 30 to 40 percent within seventeen years.[3] Assuming that this quantity of work can be shared among all those who want to work, *work time could drop to less than 1,000 hours per year at the outset of the twenty-first century*—and that despite the substantial growth (of about 40 percent) of the wealth produced. An average work time of 1,000 hours per year is becoming a tangible prospect.

It would be neither practical nor realistic to translate such a drastic reduction of the annual work time into a corresponding reduction of daily or weekly working hours. Workers and unions will have everything to gain from greater flexibility of work time and self-management of this flexibility on the basis not of weekly but of monthly, quarterly, or annual work patterns.[4] One thousand hours of work per year can correspond to, say, ten working days per month, or two fifteen-day periods in three months, etc., *the full wage continuing to be paid during all the weeks or months when one is not working*, as is the case currently for the annual paid vacation or the sabbatical year.

The definition of a work cycle based no longer on an annual scale but on a life span will be the logical continuation of this new organization of time. At present, the "working life expectancy" is twenty-five years of 1,600 hours per year, or 40,000 hours for a person employed full time. On the basis of an annual average of 1,000 hours and on the assumption that all necessary work can be shared among the entire potentially active population, the number of hours a worker works, in the course of a lifetime, will hardly exceed 20,000.

Now, 20,000 hours equals ten years of full-time work, or twenty years of half-time work; or—a more likely and sensible choice—forty years of intermittent work. With this, each person would always have the possibility of

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interrupting or reducing his or her paid activity to go back to college, or to acquire a new skill or trade, but also to build a house, raise children, join a band or write a book, become his or her own doctor or analyst, work as a volunteer in a commune or co-op or a Third World country—and this without ever losing his or her normal income. Many more people will have access to more qualified jobs, which are currently monopolized by elitist professional organizations, as the work time in these positions will be reduced. The normal practice of a trade or profession may then include much more thinking, researching, expanding and updating one's knowledge, meeting people, traveling, loving, etc. The reduction of work time will thus fulfill *one* of the basic conditions for the redistribution of work to all men and women. It will become increasingly easy as it gathers momentum.

BEYOND A CERTAIN POINT, reduction of work time may become cumulative. The lack of time and an ideological preference for wage work have led capitalist societies to entrust specialized public or private institutions with typically convivial or personal tasks like caring for infants, helping the ill or the disabled, comforting the afflicted, giving advice to the troubled, but also other things such as obtaining new neighborhood facilities, the upkeep or improvement of the urban or rural environment, etc. None of these caring activities has anything to do with economic rationality. Their productivity can't be measured. Their effectiveness or success depends much more upon human qualities and emotional investment than upon a professional qualification certified by a diploma. The time needed to comfort or to offer advice; to aid a dying person; to encourage a child to walk, talk, and sing; to do housework, cook a meal, keep a park in shape—this time is pretty much the same, whether the work is done by friends, family, neighborhood cooperatives, or by specialized services employing paid professionals.[5]

Having society perform these tasks makes no economic sense, since it does not free time on a societal scale. On the contrary, it transforms into obligatory, paid professional work what could be enjoyable free-time activities, were they taken over voluntarily, as ends in themselves. The drastic reduction of work time may permit a deprofessionalization of noneconomic activities without their becoming a burden. To be able to do more work, with and for others, in free cooperation or for the pleasure of giving, is an enrichment of life, so long as time is not scarce.

Collective Action and Strategies

THE GUARANTEE OF A LIFETIME INCOME raises fundamentally different problems depending on whether it is regarded as a form of social welfare, financed by taxes and allocated by the state, or whether, on the contrary, it is seen as the payment each citizen receives in return for his or her participation in the social processes of production.

1. *Allocation of income as social welfare.* In whatever way money is allocated by the state to the unemployed or the destitute, this allocation is *conceded* to them and may, therefore, be withdrawn or reduced. The libertarian groups—for example, in West Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands—who advocate the allocation of a basic income to all citizens, with no conditions at all, are strangely blind to the fact that this would make the recipients dependent upon the goodwill of the administration and of the politically powerful class of well-paid job holders who pay most of the taxes.

The only advantage of an unconditional basic income is that it does away completely with the obligation to work. The linkage between working and being entitled to an income is broken. But this has a reverse consequence: it also abolishes the right to work. To be more precise, it releases society from the obligation to assure each citizen of the opportunity to participate in the social process of production. As the women's liberation movement has always maintained, this opportunity is the very basis of the individual's full status as a citizen. One belongs to society (or, more exactly, to democratic society and not a slave state), and one has certain rights within it; or one is excluded from it, depending on whether one does or does not participate in the social process of production. Work that one exchanges not with society as a whole but with members

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of a particular community, whether it be familial, tribal, religious, or other, is but *particular* work, subject to particular rules implying a particular relationship. Only socially determined work is governed by rules and regulations of a *universal* character; such work alone defines the man or woman who performs it as a citizen by right, freed of any particular subordination.

2. *Social income as counterpart of social productivity.* An income guarantee based not on assistance but on linking indissolubly the right to an income and the right to work does not present these problems. It implies a fundamentally different strategy. It does not shatter the link between income and work but that between income and work *time*. Thus, a lifetime guaranteed income is not, in this conception, a new right granted by the state; it is simply the normal remuneration, spread over one's lifetime, of an amount of work done during one's life—say, 20,000 hours.

Considered in these terms, the guaranteed lifetime income is the logical consequence of a massive reduction of working hours without loss of real income. Lifelong income, then, appears as the share of socially produced wealth due each citizen because of his or her participation in the social processes of production. It is an earned income to which each citizen is entitled in exchange for the *normal* amount of work—however small it may be—that society needs from each to secure all citizens a standard of living considered normal.

Defining the amount of labor we owe society during our lifetime and getting a lifelong income as payment for this labor are not absolute novelties; they are a logical development of past union struggles for the reduction of work time without loss of income. Certain bargaining agreements concluded or at least proposed by American trade unions during the 1960s and 1970s anticipate this type of settlement. In the auto industry, a thirty-year work span was negotiated, which gave the right to full retirement ("thirty and out!"), regardless of age. In the steel industry, the union demanded "lifetime employment" and a lifetime income that corresponded to not less than thirty hours per week, even if the hours worked were actually fewer. This same type of guarantee had been gained by New York dockers, whose work load varied widely in the course of a year and, because of automation, was reduced to a very limited number of annual work hours. A British union of technicians in the electronics industry (APEX) reached a settlement that reduced the workweek by one hour yearly over a period of six consecutive years, with no loss of pay, the aim being a twenty-eight- to thirty-hour workweek.

The demand that labor time should be defined on a life basis and paid in the form of a lifelong income will make it easier to unite in action the workers and the unemployed, labor and the new social movements. This demand can be carried forward by a strategy of collective action and popular mobilization. Fundamentally, it comes down to asking that labor savings due to the microelectronic revolution benefit everyone: everyone must be enabled to work less and less with no loss of income, and everyone must be enabled to work. The distinction or opposition of workers vs. nonworkers is to lose its base, for as the average work time decreases—as it inevitably must—wage work will become intermittent for all and cease to be people's main occupation.

Transitional Politics

THE GENERAL REDUCTION IN WORK TIME without loss of income cannot be achieved merely by union struggles and collective bargaining, even though both are prerequisites. Rises in productivity differ markedly from one industry or service to another, and indeed from one division of the same industry to another. Simply to reduce working hours as productivity rises (wages remaining constant) would result in significant disparity and exorbitant privileges in those types of work in which automation has been most rapid.

Moreover, advances in productivity are not spontaneous; they always result from an external pressure—competition. In preventing the lowering of unit costs, the simple reduction of work time as productivity rises (wages remaining constant) would eliminate all competition between enterprises, and would result in a bureaucratic management routine, no one being interested in increasing productivity.

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The evolution of productivity cannot, then, be considered in any way an independent variable to which the development of work time could be subordinated. On the contrary, the redistribution of work and the reduction of work time must be programmed as independent variables and social constraints requiring that increases in productivity be achieved at fixed target dates. The organization of work and technology will adapt to these external constraints, just as they have adapted (especially in the U.S. and Japan) to the introduction of new standards of pollution control. Neither a state-regulated economy nor a police state is needed to impose sizable reductions in work time every four or five years. It is essential only that the size of these reductions and of the corresponding increases in productivity be well studied in advance.

A generalized reduction of work time at no loss of real income presupposes a firm desire for social change. It presupposes, above all, the following political actions:

a) Formulation of medium-term productivity targets for the various branches of the economy. These goals may be worked out—in fact, they have been, in the past—by planning committees composed of representatives of the unions, of the consumers, of the administration, and of executives from every branch of production. The goals for each industrial or service sector will form the basis of negotiating industrial agreements in which the growth of productivity, the level of employment, new forms of work organization, skills, training schemes, as well as the reduction of work time, will be defined, taking into account the specific conditions of each enterprise.

b) To avoid grossly unequal work times in the different industrial branches and professions, an employment policy must induce workers to move from jobs where automation is rapid toward those where it is slower or nonexistent. Only transfers of this type will permit the lowering of work time for all in proportion to the growth of *average* productivity.

c) A reform of educational methods and policies is needed. Versatility, the capacity to change and adapt, the ability to learn by oneself, to acquire new skills, will have to be encouraged at all levels. In particular, the guiding priorities and values of teaching will have to be transformed. As Klaus Haefner has shown, the educational system has so far given us the "human computers" required by Taylorized industries: priority is given to discipline, punctuality, memorization, the development of cognitive and analytical capacities—all these at the expense of "such 'secondary' qualities as affection, sympathy, compassion, the ability to love and to communicate, sensuality, artistic faculties." The present educational system will result in the catastrophically futile training of men and women for tasks in which their computers will compete with them and beat them. This catastrophe can be avoided and the reduction of work time will have an emancipatory effect only if education gives priority to the flowering of distinctly human abilities: manual, artistic, affective, interrelational, plus ability to ask unexpected questions, to invent new goals, to make sense, to refuse nonsense.

d) A changed fiscal system is needed. Financing the progressive reduction of work time without loss of income cannot be achieved by direct taxation or any form of Social Security. Both formulae would imply that the income earned for a decreasing number of working hours can be taxed heavily enough to pay people during the hours, days, weeks, etc., when they are freed from work. This would mean that for a workweek reduced by half, every hour would in fact have to be paid at twice the present rate. A fifty percent deduction would then finance your income during nonwork periods.

Now, for obvious reasons of competitiveness, a marked rise in wages cannot be instituted by any country or even by a group of countries. It would be feasible only were there a concerted action by all the industrialized nations, which is virtually impossible.

On the other hand, a very large increase of labor costs would involve a prohibitive rise in the *relative prices* of the more labor-intensive products and services: agriculture; the building trades; cultural, artistic, and educational work; the various types of maintenance and repair work; etc. The quality of these products and

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services would deteriorate and shortages would appear that would lead to the development of a black market for labor.

Such distortions of the price system, as well as problems of competitiveness, can be avoided by the following solution: employers pay only for hours worked, and thus real unit costs can be measured accurately. Loss of earned income due to the reduction of work time is compensated by a special fund. This fund is fed by a tax that, like the British Value Added Tax (VAT) or the taxes on alcohol, gas, tobacco, etc., is levied against products and services at differing rates. Such a system of taxation will slow down the continued drop in *relative prices* of those products that lend themselves to rapid automation. The weaker their societal usefulness the harder they will be taxed. Since these taxes may be deducted from export prices, competition will not be affected. As for people's real income, it will be made up of an earned income (wage) and a social income which, during periods of nonwork, will guarantee one's normal standard of living.

A system of *political prices* will thus be substituted progressively for the system of market prices. This is, after all, an extension of practices already in effect in all modern economies. They all correct market prices by a juggling game of taxes (on gas, automobiles, firearms, luxury products, and so on) and of subsidies (on mass transportation, agricultural products, theaters, housing, hospitals, nursery schools, children's school lunchrooms, etc.). When the unit costs of fully automated goods and services become negligible and their exchange values face collapse, society must inevitably establish a system of political prices reflecting its own choices and priorities in terms of individual and collective consumption. At last, the choices of what to produce will have to be made in terms of its use value (and not its exchange value). The pricing system will be the tool and the reflection of these choices. Likewise, social income for nonwork time will have to represent—in a heavily automated economy—by far the most important source of personal income. Its function will no longer be to pay people for the amount of work performed (that having become marginal), but to assure the distribution of socially produced wealth.□

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Notes

[1] According to a study by the West German Labor Unions' Economic and Social Research Institute (WSI), the labor force may be structured as follows toward the end of this century, if laissez-faire politics prevail: 25 percent, permanently employed, skilled, unionized workers; 25 percent, unskilled personnel employed intermittently by subcontractors, service industries, and small businesses; 50 percent, people who only find seasonal or occasional jobs and are unemployed most of the time.

[2] Michel Drancourt and Albert Merlin, *Demain, la croissance* (Paris: Editions Robert Laffont, 1985); and Octave Gelinier, *Le Chômage guéri . . . si nous le voulons* (Paris: Editions Hommes et Techniques, 1985).

[3] France, whose performance is not record-breaking, has registered the following increases in productivity since 1977: 5.2 percent per year in industry, 3.7 percent per year for the whole of the economy. For the period 1965-1973, an average of 6 percent and 4.8 percent per year was achieved. The apparent slowdown is due essentially to the retention of redundant personnel by public services, banks (which are nationalized), and administrations.

[4] The employees of the Province of Quebec (Canada) have gained the assessment of their work time on a monthly basis: they owe 140 hours per month. They are free (with minimal restrictions) to choose their daily and weekly schedules as they wish.

[5] In previous times this sort of work was performed by slaves or domestic servants. At present, the jobs of domestic servants tend to be socialized, which does not change their nature substantially. A paid job that does not valorize any capital, that serves particular individuals in their private lives, and whose professionalization does not increase its productivity, is a servant's job. Its function is to free a privileged social stratum from a number of necessary or desirable tasks which they could easily perform themselves if they cared to, by transferring these tasks onto people who can find no socially useful or productive work. The multiplication of these jobs is a sign not of economic vitality but of decadence. □

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY ADRIENNE FOULKE AND THE AUTHOR

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Seweryn Bialer

How Far Can Gorbachev Go?

Crisis, Reform, and Limits

We are at a major juncture in Soviet history. There is much potential for change. However, I stress the word *potential* because thus far in Gorbachev's rule, it is much too early to speak about major change. First, the potential comes from the new generation of leaders that has taken over. There are younger people on the middle, upper-middle, and upper levels of the government, the party, and the military. This change can only be compared to Stalin's Great Purge of 1937-38. Although this time it's not bloody, many people have been arrested. In Moscow I was told that the man who was secretary of the Communist party of Uzbekistan (the largest central Asian republic) for twenty years committed suicide before he could be arrested for corruption.

Second, there is potential for change in foreign policy partly because there is a change in U.S.-Soviet relations. We had a summit meeting; we started to communicate again; we started negotiations. In the Soviet Union there is an ongoing reexamination of the foreign policy of the 1970s, a policy which, in my opinion, did very much to destroy détente. This reevaluation is to be expected because most of the ten or eleven men who are now in the Politburo were not there when the decisions of 1976-79 were made—decisions that were so detrimental to Soviet-American relations. One of these was Afghanistan.

The third area of potential change involves a critical point—the next two, three, four years—in the arms race and arms control. In my opinion there is also a Soviet reexamination of military programs and policies and their relation to preventing an arms race.

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I would like to make three propositions, one each about the domestic situation in the Soviet Union, foreign policy, and security policy. I will speak first about the domestic situation because I believe it is central to an understanding of foreign policy and security.

Stalinist Economics

MY FIRST PROPOSITION is that the economic model that exists in the Soviet Union today is purely Stalinist. It is, with minor adjustments, the same model that was created by Stalin in the 1930s. Furthermore, the new leaders of the Soviet Union have not given any sign that they want to change this model. What they want to change is the pattern of growth, which under Stalin involved a strategy of ever greater inputs of raw material, labor, land, capital, and subsequent expansions of Soviet industry. The present leadership wants to achieve the type of intensive growth that exists in developed capitalist countries, but without changing the Stalinist model of the economy. In my opinion, this is not possible.

In the Soviet Union there is a crisis that is most often described as economic. But the economic crisis is only part of a general crisis—a political crisis that is primarily a social crisis; a crisis of a society without a goal, without ethics; an ideological crisis; a crisis of the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe. I could go on. What is clear is that it is a trend and that we do not know how long it will last. What we do know is that it is a crisis of effectiveness and not of survival. Although the goals of the Soviet leaders are difficult to achieve, the Soviet Union is still a stable society, not one in the throes of revolution or in danger of disintegration.

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There is no doubt that the new Soviet leaders understand that they are in a major crisis. At a recent closed party meeting Gorbachev put it in a nutshell: "What is at stake today is the ability of the Soviet Union to enter the new millennium in a manner worthy of a great and prosperous power. Without the hard work and complete dedication of each and every one, it is not even possible to preserve what we have achieved." This is not the kind of language used in the debates of the 1920s between Trotsky, Zinoviev, Bukharin, and Stalin. It is a characterization of the Soviet situation that I find even stronger than Khrushchev's descriptions of Stalin's crimes.

As much as the Soviet leadership understands the systematic crisis, there is a triviality in explanations for its cause. This triviality is reflected in the formula that Gorbachev has adopted for change, a formula containing four elements. The first is an increase in social discipline—reducing alcoholism and absenteeism among the workers and fighting corruption. At the moment this effort is quite effective, but I don't know for how long. Every Soviet leader has started his rule with fighting corruption and improving discipline. But coercion and exhortation alone do not suffice to make for discipline.

The second part of the formula is leadership: "Leadership is the key to our success; we have wasted ten to fifteen years." Gorbachev has replaced virtually hundreds of ministers, directors of major institutions, and over 50 percent of the members of the Central Committee (Khrushchev replaced only 40 percent). This turnover approaches the level of Stalin's in 1937-38. Most of the new leaders were formerly the deputies of the now-dismissed ministers. The typical minister, ten to fifteen years younger than his predecessor, is sympathetic to the goals of Gorbachev and, of course, very grateful to him.

The third element is various policy changes. There were so many irrationalities in the eighteen years of Brezhnev's leadership that I once started a list and stopped at twenty-eight changes made without major alterations in the Soviet system. Gorbachev is making the same kind of changes. For example, all investments are now frozen and channeled into new technology. Instead of building new factories, the Soviets are buying or producing new machines to put into old factories. (Of course, in a situation where they have a shortage of labor, this is the only course to take.)

The fourth element is organizational change. Again, this is very easy to understand. You cut the bureaucracy, you make government smaller. You cut the Ministry of Computer Industry by one-third, you put three or four other ministries together and reduce their personnel by one-fourth, and so on. I must say that I have seen too many such cuts in the last sixty years of Soviet history to be much impressed by them. In a year, two years, three years, bureaucrats find a way to return to those ministries through back doors. Nevertheless, these cuts represent an attack on a bloated bureaucracy. Still, there is no institutional change, no structural change. The parameters of the system are still direct planning, passivity of money and credit, and the role of profit as an accounting device. Under the ratchet principle each factory receives its plans for the next year on the basis of the plan it fulfilled last year. If a manager produces 103 percent, his basis for next year will be 103 percent. Of course, everybody will try not to perform 103 percent but 100.1 percent so that next year's plan will not be so high. There is no change in this respect.

I think that Gorbachev has consolidated his power at the top level. He doesn't have problems in the Politburo, the Secretariat, or in the Presidium of the Council of Ministers. He has his people in place, some of whom, such as the new prime minister, Nikolai Ryzhkov, and deputy prime minister, Nikolai Talyzin, are experienced, intelligent and responsible managers.

HOWEVER, I BELIEVE THAT GORBACHEV'S formula is not sufficient to deal with the crisis that the Soviets have. The reasons for this are primarily social. We underestimate the social questions which, even if the political conditions were different, would present an enormous obstacle to the success of the leadership. The Soviet peasantry cannot be described as a class. It is a fragmented group that was brutalized and ostracized by Stalin and later isolated and fragmented under Khrushchev and Brezh-

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nev. While agricultural work hours constitute over 35 percent of the total Soviet work hours per year, only 18 percent of the agricultural population are men aged fifteen to fifty-one. Over 35 percent are women in their forties and fifties. The bold, the imaginative go to the city, leaving only the very young, the very old, and middle-aged women in the countryside. If the Soviet Union tomorrow introduced the revolution that China has done—the reprivatization of agriculture—the result would be a catastrophe. It would not work simply because of the differences in human material.

Similarly, in industry there is the Soviet joke that says the government pretends to pay the workers and they pretend to work. If he were given a choice between working more and getting paid for it or working less and stealing what he is not being paid, I am not certain which the Soviet worker would select. My guess is that he would choose stealing.

There is another joke I heard from an adviser to Gorbachev. It's about the Japanese and the Soviet worker. (Until recently the symbol of technological progress was the United States. Now Japan more and more is the object of envy.) The Japanese says to the Russian worker, "You know, in my factory, two hours I work for myself, two hours I work for the boss, and four hours I work for a greater Japan." The Soviet worker replies, "You know, I, too. Two hours I work for myself. I have no boss and why should I work for a greater Japan?"

You meet Soviet managers. These people are intelligent and experienced. You meet them one on one, and they can tell you about everything that's gone wrong. They know it very well. But they have gotten used to the system and how to work within it, how to take advantage of it. These are rational men in a nonrational situation. If you took the first-rate manager of a U.S. television factory and placed him in the same position in Moscow, if he were really intelligent and rational, within two weeks he would behave like a Soviet manager. He would not pay any attention to quality. He would be uninterested in the consumer, or in the cost of transportation because the government pays for it. He would not be interested in the variety of his product or in his competition. This is the Soviet system and the managers do not know how to work differently.

Finally we come to the leaders. The Soviet leaders clearly believe in the system. Each also believes, as every new leader believes, as every new American president believes, that his predecessor made very stupid mistakes and that he will avoid those mistakes. And in many cases he avoids those mistakes but makes other mistakes that are even bigger. The new Soviet leaders believe in the system or consider the price they have to pay for a structural-institutional change too high to be paid yet. Hungary can never be a model for the Soviet Union, although the Soviets will borrow pieces here and there. The size of the country, the role of the military-industrial complex, and, more important, the question of political security are too different. Hungary can have experiments in the market economy because there are 40,000 Soviet troops there and more divisions on its border, so if anything goes wrong politically, if there is a devolution of power from the economy to the polity, those troops will guarantee that nothing will happen. In the Soviet Union there is no such guarantee.

China, also, is not a model, for a number of reasons. First, as mentioned, there is the nature of the human material, the Russian versus the Chinese peasant. Second, the Chinese elites and leaders believe in themselves much more than do the Soviet elites. Deng Xiaoping and the people around him are very confident. The Russians are not so confident. More important, China is an ethnically homogeneous country. There are only 4-5 percent non-Chinese distributed along its peripheries. In the Soviet Union, Russians constitute about 50 percent of the population and non-Slavic peoples, 30 percent. In such a multiethnic state, devolution of power would not mean simply devolution to the Russians but devolution to people of other nationalities who have their own republics and desire greater autonomy.

Another major reason that China cannot serve as a model for the Soviet Union is that China doesn't have an empire. A devolution of power in Russia would give an inescapable signal to the Poles, the Hungarians, the East Germans, and everyone else that one can make

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liberalizing reforms. But those countries have illegitimate governments, governments that the people did not elect, that are maintained by power. Therefore, while Russia could survive a devolution because of the force of Russian nationalism, in these other countries nationalism works against the communist regimes. This is why I don't think that the Chinese kind of experiment is likely in Russia.

I would describe the current Soviet leadership, in contradistinction to the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras, as managerial and reformist. Khrushchev's leadership was populist and ideological. His was the last attempt to revitalize the party and the ideology in the Soviet Union. Brezhnev's leadership represented conservatism and corporatism. It was conservative in the sense that it didn't make reforms or change the system and corporatist in the sense that it was based on bargaining and agreements between various institutional elite groups—the army, the police, the party apparatus, the economic managers, the state apparatus administration.

Gorbachev's leadership is managerial in the sense that its model is the chief executive officer on every level. It's a vertical type of command. It's reformist in the sense that it wants to change the personnel and introduce policy and organizational modifications and stricter controls. It is not reformist in terms of trying to introduce an institutional reform that will go beyond the parameters of the Stalinist economic model.

Perhaps it is too early to say this. I do not know what Gorbachev will do three or five years from now. But for the foreseeable future, this seems to be the situation.

I must stress also that Gorbachev's leadership is reformist but not liberal. As a matter of fact, I think that it will be harsher in some respects than the leadership of Brezhnev. Brezhnev was very ineffective, and the ineffectiveness of the coercive bureaucracy saved people from it. If Gorbachev is successful in making the Soviet Union more efficient in this regard, his regime may be more oppressive. At the same time, there will be no major change in performance in comparison to industrial democracies, in coping with technological developments and catching up with the West.

Gorbachev understands, as Stalin did and Brezhnev did not, the impact of the domestic program on foreign and security policy. Without a strong base, you will not have a strong security and foreign policy. This is Gorbachev's chief preoccupation.

Retrenchment in Foreign Policy

WHAT CAN BE SAID about Gorbachev's foreign policy? Let me say first what it is not. It is not a neo-isolationist policy. The Soviet Union will not suddenly turn away from the world and not want to play a role as a global power. It is also not a "Europe first" policy. Some people are suggesting that the Soviets will turn away from the United States and Reagan in disgust and deal only with Europe. Of course they will deal with Europe, but what do they want from Europe? They want Europe to press the United States to change its policy. For better or worse, neither we nor they can escape from each other.

Neither is Gorbachev's program one of major loans or credits to import technology, a course of action some people think would provide the industrial democracies with greater leverage over Soviet policies. In my opinion, the Russians are aiming for self-reliance in the economic field in the sense that they want to have self-generated technological progress, not progress based on imports. This is partly because they don't have the money to pay for Western technology and do not want to get involved in a very major deficit.

Finally, Gorbachev's policy is not one of foreign adventurism. Many people predicted that Russia, like so many empires in the past, would look to foreign adventures simply to escape the consequences of domestic crises. This has not proved the case. Among the Russian population and even among the elites, foreign adventures are not very popular. You don't find articles on Afghanistan in the Soviet press. Why not? If writing about it would bring support or legitimacy, of course they would do it. The Russian people are committed very much to their empire in Eastern Europe: they regard it as legitimate. However, they are not interested in adventures in foreign lands far away.

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So, what is the current foreign policy? It is a policy of retrenchment, of greater integration of Eastern Europe into the Soviet economy, and of orthodoxy in Eastern Europe. It's a policy of trying to preserve what they already have achieved, to preserve their credibility as a global power, a credibility which suffered very much in the last four or five years. The Soviet commitment to Angola and the invasion of Afghanistan can best be described by de Gaulle's explanation of his first meeting with Churchill: "I was too weak to show weakness." Angola and Afghanistan are commitments that remain from the old regime. On the other hand, the Soviets are now rethinking their future commitment to the Third World. They are coming to the conclusion that they have been reckless and that expansion of their influence in the Third World cannot be achieved by military power without economic power to follow. They are now much more cautious, and they understand that economics is in many respects a key to the Third World.

And of course, the Soviet policy is also one of waiting for the trouble that will come to the United States one way or another without the Russians lifting even a finger. Perhaps in the Philippines, Pakistan, Mexico, or the international financial economy, or wherever—the Soviets are waiting for it. If a situation already exists, they are also quite eager to help history and push it a little faster. Their commitment to Nicaragua is a typical example of this. It has increased significantly but is not sufficient to provoke a confrontation with the United States. It is sufficient, in my opinion, to prevent the overthrow of the Sandinista government.

My conclusion is that we now have a situation in Soviet foreign policy where there is a breather, what the Russians call *peredyshka*, a pause between a phase of greater activity and one of defensive activity. It is not clear whether the Soviets will be able to hold their position without major changes in their domestic growth. My proposition is that the Soviet Union does not have sufficient resources as of now to provide an anchor for a really global policy, a global role such as played by the United States.

Search for Security

My proposition here is that while the Soviet Union is in domestic crisis, the prospects of a new and larger arms race are frightening to the Soviet leaders; they truly want to avoid it. In my opinion, they are making and will continue to make proposals that will bring their position closer to meeting American strategic concerns.

What has happened in Russia and what I find immensely interesting to observe is that they have suddenly discovered a new concept of security. Their old concept was very simple—total security. If ten missiles or ten bombers are good, twenty are much better, regardless of your opponent. This concept forgets the fact that if you overinsure yourself and build those twenty bombers rather than the ten that you need, your adversary will become alarmed and build twenty bombers too. The whole cycle will then go on and on. As one student of Soviet military doctrine describes it, a policy of total security is a policy of making everybody else insecure. Obviously this is a prescription for an arms race.

The Soviets now understand, or say that they understand—they are writing in quite high official papers—that the concept of security in the nuclear age is common security, that Russia and the United States have to be concerned with each other's security if they want to be secure themselves. Gorbachev has repeatedly quoted Einstein's statement that the nuclear age has changed everything but our way of thinking.

This new attitude can make discussion with the Soviets infuriating—especially to those of us who made the same discovery earlier. They are very impatient and self-righteous. They say, "Can't you understand that this is the truth, that this is what you have to do? Everything that will happen will be your responsibility, not ours." Recently, when one official was giving me this kind of thing, I replied, "Look, for you, life started with Gorbachev. For us, it started before. We have to remember what has happened in the last forty years, not only in the last year."

In my opinion, for a while the Soviet political leadership will have control over the military to a greater degree than it had in the past. One of

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the reasons for this is that the current generations of younger party and military leaders have no past ties. They are two professional groups without bonds of friendship or a symbiotic relationship in which they think the same way, where the political leaders would immediately approve any security suggestions made by the military.

I THINK THAT THE OFFENSIVE weapons proposals recently made by the Soviets are serious. In this area they are coming close to a bargaining position where it might be possible to work things out in two or three years of negotiations. They are willing to be open-minded and to change. At the same time, I think that their position on SDI research is immovable and will preclude any agreement on offensive strategic weapons in the foreseeable future. I cannot explain the situation with total confidence, but it seems to me that the current Soviet leadership fears an American breakout resulting from unrestricted basic and applied research on what they call "space strike" or "exotic" weapons.

With regard to security questions, the Russians have both a maximum program and a minimum program. Their maximum program is to avoid a new arms spiral, to avoid it by making a deal about the SDI where major concessions on offensive weapons will be translated into a moratorium on the testing and development above the subcomponent on the American side. Whether this is possible I do not know. I am rather pessimistic. The Soviet minimum program, if they cannot achieve the maximum, is to start a peace offensive of gigantic proportions. The Russians are starting to learn how to use the media in both Europe and the United States and to ask questions that Western governments, especially our government, will find very difficult to answer.

What should be our response? It is absolutely clear that we are now much more in the driver's seat in our negotiations with Russia than we ever were before. The correlation of forces, to use the Soviet term, has changed. We were kicked many times by Russia in the 1970s, and, of course, there is always the temptation to kick back when you get up. In the 1970s we were looking for strength through negotiations. Today we are looking for negotiations through strength.

Let's assume that the strategic balance as it exists now is really in Russia's favor. I have my doubts about it, but there are people I respect who say that this is so—it's a question of possible first-strike potential and so on. Let's assume that we have real strategic concerns. We can meet them in one of two ways. We can either go the way of negotiation of very radical offensive arms reductions or we can go through SDI in its ABM defense version. From what I know I would conclude that the best way is the first, the way of meeting our real strategic concerns through negotiating with the Russians and seeing if we can make a deal. We can influence the Soviets very little in domestic affairs but quite clearly in security policies.

What is our goal? When one speaks about Soviet-American relations, one must ask, "What do we want from the Russians?" I am not certain that I know what our goal is, and I am not certain that the people in our government know either. A colleague of mine, Richard Pipes, a distinguished historian teaching at Harvard, has written a very interesting piece called "Survival Is Not Enough." I fully agree with him. Survival is not enough. We have to defend our way of life, among other things. But I think it is legitimate to ask the question: How much and what do we want to achieve beyond survival? Do we want a homogeneous world of democracies? Every one of us would like it very much. Is it practical and possible? We know it isn't. So, what can we reasonably hope to achieve? Beyond survival—which, by the way, is a good beginning—we should try to achieve changes in Soviet security and foreign policies.

In Washington, there are two opposing schools of thought on this matter. One group, which I call the ideologues, simply does not want to negotiate with the Russians. In my opinion, they oppose negotiations not because of anything the Soviets will or will not do but because such negotiations might create an atmosphere in which American society, and therefore the U.S. Congress, would be less willing to spend the money necessary for military expenditures. I cannot say that this think-

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ing is totally wrong; such a danger exists. However, I agree more with the other group, which I call the pragmatic conservatives—people like Senators Nunn and Goldwater and Secretary of State Shultz—who argue that we have to negotiate and that perhaps we can achieve a breakthrough even though we are now out of phase with the Soviet Union.

It is quite clear that we have now before us a few years in which the new Soviet leadership and new opportunities in arms control provide options for us. Let's hope that we have the wisdom to use these options well—for the good of all of us. □

Lewis Coser Comments

I by and large agree with the main thrust of Seweryn Bialer's article. Independent observers and analysts on the democratic left will have to develop a very complex position in regard to recent trends in Soviet Russia. They should not fall into step with reactionary fanatics such as Norman Podhoretz or Richard Pipes who claim that nothing of significance has happened in the Evil Empire with the advent of Gorbachev, but neither should they be taken in by a resuscitated fellow-travelerish line that claims democracy is about to blossom under the new general secretary.

The changes brought about during the first year of Gorbachev's ascension are not just cosmetic. He is intent, I believe, upon opening up Russian policies, domestically as well as in foreign affairs. His personal telephone call to Sakharov telling him that he could return to Moscow from his long exile; his crusade against the excesses of the bureaucracy in the party and the state administration; the relaxation of rigid controls over the visual arts and literature; the strong indications that *Dr. Zhivago* is soon to be published in the Soviet Union—such moves are surely more than just "public relations." Some of them are genuine concessions intended to relax the stranglehold of the party bureaucracy over the living forces of Russian society. The disarmament offers that Gorbachev presented in the Iceland meeting with Reagan are likewise not just window dressing but were meant to be taken very seriously. The general secretary wishes to bring about a relaxation of international tensions. Even the fact that Raissa Gorbachev appears at home, and especially abroad, in stylish "Western" dresses has a symbolic significance, as has the increasing freedom for rock groups to perform unimpeded.

YET IT IS ESSENTIAL TO REMEMBER that all these concessions were granted at the discretion of the all powerful general secretary, and what he has given today he may again take away tomorrow. What we witness in Russia today has much in common with the policies of enlightened absolutist rulers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for example, Catherine the Great. Then and now Russian rulers took progressive and enlightened measures, provided these measures would not undermine their power in the Empire. To the extent that Gorbachev follows similar lines it behooves us to applaud, as Diderot or Voltaire applauded Catherine. We may also hope the thaw will bring consequences not willed or anticipated by the ruler.

BUT WE SHOULD NOT CONFOUND these reformist policies with measures of reform and change that have come about, not by the will of the ruler but by the gathering of autonomous forces within the society. I think here of, for example, the way the *Magna Carta* came into being in medieval Britain. It was not the benevolence of the king but rather the united power of the barons that forced the king to grant this charter of English liberties.

I am not sure that something along these lines will happen in the near future in Soviet society, but only then could one conclude that the structural characteristics of the Russian state have changed fundamentally. In the meantime, let us rejoice at the loosening of the controls over the Russian people. And let us be aware that Gorbachev's reform measures will be followed up only if he feels that he is not forced to tighten the reins because of Reaganite threats and the beating of war drums by American rightist diehards. □

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Nicolaus Mills

Mississippi Summer—1964

In Memory of Judy Northrup

In the summer of 1964 July was "Hospitality Month" in Mississippi. But as the volunteers and staff of the Mississippi Summer Project began settling into the countryside, what they found waiting for them was, as one volunteer put it, a "magnolia jungle." The aim of the Summer Project was to challenge the segregationist policies of the most openly racist state in the nation. As John Lewis, chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) observed at the start of the summer, "Mississippi is the stronghold of the whole vicious system of segregation. If we can crack Mississippi, we will likely be able to crack the system in the rest of the country."

Mississippi was, however, in no mood to accept a Second Reconstruction—especially one led by the Council of Confederated Organizations (COFO), a coalition made up of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and most important of all, SNCC, which had been doing voter registration in Mississippi since 1961. Twenty-four hours after arriving in Mississippi from their Oxford, Ohio, training session, three Summer Project workers—student volunteer Andrew Goodman, CORE veteran Michael Schwerner, and Mississippi-born James Chaney—disappeared. The only clue was the station wagon they had been driving when they went to inspect the ruins of the Mt. Zion Methodist Church in Neshoba County, which had been fire-bombed days earlier after its congregation said it could be used to house a summer Freedom School.

The burned station wagon was found near the Bogue Chitto Swamp, miles from the road the three men would have taken to return home, and the message it conveyed was unmistakable. Those who had signed up for the Summer Project were marked men and women. They might come from the "best schools" in the country, but in Mississippi they were the enemy and there was no place they could hide.

President Johnson responded to the disappearance of Schwerner, Goodman, and Chaney by sending sailors from the nearby Navy Air Station in Meridian to help search for them. He dispatched Allen Dulles, former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, to meet with Mississippi Governor Paul Johnson in Jackson. But in the isolation of rural Mississippi, it was hard to be reassured by such concern or even by the president's dramatic July 2nd signing of the Civil Rights Act.

In a letter to the parents of all the volunteers, Bob Moses, director of the Summer Project, pledged restraint. "We are," he promised, "specifically avoiding any demonstrations for integrated facilities, as we do not feel the state is ready to permit such activity at this time." But Moses knew that by itself such caution would not be enough to protect the volunteers. Help was also needed from the federal government, and in the same letter in which he tried to assure the volunteers' parents of COFO's commitment to "non-violence in all situations," he urged the parents to use whatever power they had to spur the FBI and Justice Department into action. "We are asking all parents to use their influence in the coming weeks to pressure President Johnson and Attorney General Kennedy into a commitment to protect workers *before* violence occurs, instead of waiting until the worst has happened before they offer their help," Moses wrote.[1]

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For the volunteers, the new reality was epitomized by the *Security Handbook* they received before leaving Oxford. Like the *Boy Scout Handbook*, COFO's handbook was above all concerned with practical advice. It instructed the volunteer to "Know all roads in and out of town. Study the county map. Know locations of sanctuaries and safe homes in the county. When getting out of a car at night, make sure the car's inside light is out." What was impossible to ignore was that this advice was designed to prevent the reader of this handbook from being murdered.

UNLIKE BOB MOSES'S LETTER to the volunteers' parents, the *Security Handbook* was not written for public consumption. The advice it offered was a reflection of COFO's deepest fears about the summer. The disappearance of Schwerner, Chaney, and Goodman so quickly after their arrival in Mississippi more than justified these fears, but even if nothing had happened to the three men, the advice in the handbook made sense. In anticipation of the civil rights "invasion," Mississippi had been whipped into a state of frenzy.

Governor Paul Johnson and the Mississippi State Legislature had taken the lead. In the spring they had doubled the number of state highway patrolmen, then passed laws that allowed highway patrol officers to make arrests within the limits of a city and to act as policemen, even without a request from local officials. Legislation was passed permitting cities and counties to borrow policemen from each other, and the kinds of activities COFO could be expected to engage in were specifically banned. One new law provided for massive quarantining (house arrest) "where there is imminent danger to public safety." Another law made it a felony to circulate pamphlets that encouraged boycotts, and still another law made it a crime to operate a school without permission of the county clerk.

Local officials were only too glad to follow these leads. In Jackson, the state capital, Mayor Allen Thompson turned the city into an armed fortress. The Jackson police force was doubled, two hundred shotguns were bought, tear gas masks were provided for every policeman, and detention compounds, which the mayor claimed could hold up to 25,000 prisoners, were set up. The overkill in Jackson was symbolized by the purchase of an armored personnel carrier, outfitted with twelve-gauge steel walls and bullet-proof windows and quickly nicknamed the "Thompson tank."

But there was nothing funny about the state of mind all this represented. In the context of invasion frenzy, it became possible for Mississippi officials to claim that any violence that occurred was not their responsibility but the invaders'. "If violence erupts," Mississippi Senator John Stennis declared, "the blood will be on the hands of those who formed and led this invasion into a state where they were not welcome nor invited."[2]

For those who would be committing the violence, the meaning of such disclaimers was clear. They had a green light to do as they pleased. In July the Klan's official Mississippi publication, the *Klan Ledger*, would warn, "We are not going to sit back and permit our rights and the rights of our posterity to be negotiated away by a group composed of atheistic priests, brain-washed black savages, and mongrelized money-worshippers, meeting with some stupid or cowardly politician. Take heed, atheists and mongrels, we will not travel your path to Leninist Hall, but we will buy YOU a ticket to the Eternal if you insist." But long before July, the hate campaign against the Summer Project was in full swing among the organizations whose members were likely to do the fire bombings. Klan headquarters issued an instruction sheet that said, "Each local unit must make a thorough study of the technique of harassing the enemy at little or no cost to themselves."

As the summer approached, the Klan began holding open rallies, and new organizations, such as the Association for the Preservation of the White Race, grew so rapidly that they ceased being marginal. By mid-June there was not a corner of Mississippi that was safe, nor a court system in which a volunteer could expect a fair trial.[3]

On arriving in Mississippi the first task the volunteers faced was adjusting to the conditions on which their survival depended. Before

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leaving Oxford, volunteer Jan Handke had written her parents, "My mind still stumbles on the realization that I'm actually going to Mississippi. Like Bosco poured into milk, much of my experience is still sitting on the surface of my mind. It hasn't sunk down, much less been assimilated into my other nineteen years of experience." Now such worries had to be assimilated. A volunteer could still be afraid, but he or she had to have a concrete sense of where the dangers lay. The volunteers of most use to COFO were those who realized their whole way of thinking had to be changed. As Clark Gardener, a volunteer staying in Carthage, observed, "Someone said at Oxford at the orientation session that once you are in Mississippi, everything outside it seems unreal—there is a lot of truth in it."[4]

It was necessary for the volunteers to understand that, although they had come to Mississippi to help, once they left the North they had also become dependents. "We were constantly reminded that we were in Mississippi," Stephen Bingham wrote. "Every home was well stocked with firearms; every time we drove up to a house at night, we sounded our horns to let the household know we were friends." In Batesville it was a similar story. Safety, as Geoff Cowan discovered, could never be assumed. "Partly as a tactic and partly as a reflex, COFO workers constantly wave hello to all of Batesville's Negroes and the Negroes respond in kind," Cowan found. "For me, the gesture has already become one of kinship. It means a lot; it means howdy; it means I'm fine; it means good luck; it means I'm with you; it means we're all in this together."[5]

The volunteers' day-to-day survival rested on the ability of the black families they were staying with to protect them. "We feel safe here surrounded by the Negro community. The feeling of security evaporates when we go downtown," a Laurel volunteer observed, and in Greenville Nancy Schieffelin found the same dependence emerging: "We eat in Negro restaurants, frequent only Negro joints. The Negroes are our security. The white man in the car is a threat."

Understanding these new rules of survival required the volunteers to lose the middle-class assurance they brought with them. This was not easy at first, especially for the volunteer who did not feel personally endangered. "I have had to force myself to follow the rigid safety precautions which have been carefully conceived for our protection. . . . I have to remind myself constantly of the danger, lest I make what could prove a fatal slip," volunteer Mike Clurman confessed. As the volunteers settled into their summer routines, they began, however, to adopt a caution they had not anticipated. Even if they were not personally the victims of violence, there was always someone they knew who was. The volunteers' early letters home are filled with talk about the tension they feel and their measured routines. "We can go nowhere alone or at night," wrote Jacques Calma, a volunteer isolated in the countryside. "All doors must be locked; all shades drawn. The overhead light in the car must be disconnected." Even in a town such as Greenwood, where COFO had its summer headquarters, numbers did not guarantee safety or allow for a quiet walk in the evening. "I cannot describe the fears, the tensions, the uncertainties of living here," wrote a Greenwood volunteer. "When I walk, I am always looking for cars and people: if Negro, they are my friends; if white, I am frightened and walk faster. When driving and a car approaches, I am always asking: black? white?"

Acquiring a new sense of dependence and vulnerability was not, however, the only crucial adjustment the volunteers had to make. They also had to accustom themselves to the poverty of the families they were staying with. Living with a black family in the black section of town meant experiencing the same problems it did, and many of the volunteers were able to describe these problems with sympathy and insight. They saw that living on the black side of town meant living in neighborhoods "carefully marked by the abrupt ending of pavement, phone lines, electric lights, sewers." They saw that, if you were poor and black, social services were virtually nonexistent. "The very old people, crippled and often mentally deranged, are home, wearily struggling to maintain themselves. There are no old people's homes, no

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hired nurses," Lisa Vogel sadly noted. "I watched an old man hobble with a cane to a tub of suds under a tree in his yard and help his crippled wife wash the clothes. A half dozen scantily feathered chickens scratched in the dirt. Talking to us, the woman could only say, 'You're freedom? Yes, freedom. I'm praying for you.'"

Above all, the volunteers saw how close to the edge blacks lived in Mississippi. They were not being metaphoric when they wrote, "The poverty and sorrow of the neighborhoods doesn't leave you. I've been to hundreds of houses I could kick down with my feet and a small hammer."

THE MOST REVEALING LETTERS OF ALL, however, were not those the volunteers wrote as sympathetic observers but those they wrote as outsiders immersed in the black life of Mississippi. The bugs and dirt and heat of an America they had only read about were now theirs. They learned they could get by without conveniences they had always relied on. "We take this bucket out in the backyard and fill it with water warmed over a fire. It's pitch black so we shine Mr. Clark's truck lights on the bucket. Then I strip down naked and stand in the bucket to wash. That is the way you take a bath around here," a Mileston volunteer reported. The volunteers also learned there were problems no amount of ingenuity could cover up. "One day has passed in Shaw, and the other America is opening itself up before my naive, middle-class eyes," a new arrival noted. "The cockroaches draw patterns across the floor and table and make a live patchwork on the bed. Sweat covers my skin and cakes brown in my joints—wrist, elbow, knee, neck."

For the volunteers, what followed was that the kind of lesson that could not be taught at Oxford was learned very quickly in Mississippi. They came, as a result of their own trials, to appreciate the courage and self-discipline it took for blacks to survive in Mississippi day by day. "It takes coming down here to grasp all this, no matter how many books we've read," is a constant refrain. The changes the volunteers went through were very much like those James Agee describes in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* when he goes from being a writer doing a story about Georgia sharecroppers to someone sharing their food and sleeping in their beds. Typical is the July 4th letter of a Hattiesburg volunteer. It begins, "Every time I talk to people, I hear about things which bring tears to my eyes." Then suddenly the tone of the letter changes, and what emerges is how much the volunteer has been changed by his time in Mississippi. "I have begun, finally, to feel deep inside me the horrible double existence Negroes have to lead . . . the strategies they must learn to survive without either going crazy or being physically maimed—or destroyed."

The physical bravery their black hosts showed was what was most striking to the volunteers, and the context in which that bravery showed itself was driven home by the reaction to the disappearance of Schwerner, Chaney, and Goodman. As one volunteer grimly noted, "It is significant that while the Federal government and others were searching for the three missing bodies, they found two bodies . . . whose torsos were severed in half. When it was determined that they were only local Negroes, not any of the three civil rights workers, all interest in them ceased." At the same time the volunteers also came to appreciate the less spectacular courage blacks took in risking jobs that could be terminated at the whim of an employer. "Nearly everyone black in Mississippi is at least a year in debt. The threat of suspended credit and foreclosure is a tremendous burden; our presence adds much to the load," Robert Feinglass observed, and in Shaw a volunteer reported, "Many of the homes we are staying in were shot up when the people went down to register during the past two years. . . . Another person was fired from his job yesterday because two of us were staying with him."

Even in periods of calm there was, the volunteers came to realize, no way a Mississippi black could avoid paying a price for being black. The most moving passages in the volunteers' letters are invariably descriptions of the children they encountered. A volunteer did not have to struggle for the right words when it came to writing about, "Kids that eat a bit of bread for breakfast, chicken necks for dinner.

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Kids that don't have clothes to go to school in." These were scenes that shook the volunteers to the core, and when they described them, they did so in a language in which even the clinical was moving. "I saw other children today who bore the marks of the Negro in rural Mississippi. One had a protruding navel the size of the stone he held in his hand. Several had distended stomachs," a volunteer angrily wrote, before breaking off his account to ask, "Is America really the land that greets its visitors with 'Send me your tired, your poor, your helpless masses . . . '?"

Often the volunteers, most of whom had come South out of sympathy rather than political ideology, did not realize how radicalized they had become. From July on, however, their letters are not only filled with bitterness about the system but with doubts about their ability to be equal to the people they had come to help. The toughest problem, as volunteer Gene Nelson, a Yale student, noted, was "figuring out ways of being worth it." At times the gratitude blacks showed could be overwhelming. "For many local citizens our coming was a religious event. Sometimes when we pass by, the children cheer," a Batesville volunteer reported. In Gulfport a volunteer noted: "Fifty times a day people come up to us and thank us and tell us what we're doing is so fine, so good."

It was no small task for the volunteers to make sure the kindness they received did not lapse into the deference toward whites that they were struggling to overcome. The volunteers had to learn to react in ways that even the COFO staff, with all its fears, had not anticipated. For a young medical student in Meridian, it was necessary to learn when not to be professional. "I gave medical advice this week to a father whose son had an abscess on his chest," he reported. "The father thanked me and kissed my hand. I was embarrassed and didn't know what to do, so I kissed his hand." For Sally Belfrage, staying with the Amos family in Greenwood, it was necessary to use her authority to deny her authority. Unable to persuade Mr. Amos to sit down while she was eating, Belfrage realized that "in some extraordinary paradox he would not think of us as equals until I ordered him to. I begged him to sit down; he wouldn't. I *told* him to sit down. He did, in great confusion. Somehow or another, everything was all right after that."[6]

Some barriers were not always possible to cross. "We're constantly on display when we're at the house; neighbors file in and out to have a look at us," a Canton volunteer found, and in Batesville Geoff Cowan realized that, even with the best intentions, some feelings were too ingrained to be changed in a short time. "Sometimes you feel you're getting there when a woman tells you about her fears and tells how she lies to the white folks but secretly hates them," Cowan wrote. "But a white man never turns black in Mississippi. There are still the long silences and the incomprehensible phrases. Women still call you Mr. Geoff instead of Geoff, and old men offer their chairs. That doesn't disappear when they start to talk about fear."

For the volunteers who kept working at it, there were, however, breakthroughs, and when these breakthroughs occurred, what followed was a closeness that deeply touched them—and the families they were staying with. Often the closeness could only be described in self-conscious terms. "I have become so close to the family I am staying with—eleven people—that Mrs. H. finally paid me a great compliment," a Holmes County volunteer wrote her mother. "She was introducing me to one of her Negro women friends and said, 'This is Nancy, my adopted daughter.'"

But there was also a closeness that could be more natural and that showed up in daily routines and the possessiveness black families cam to feel toward the volunteers staying with them. Sally Belfrage's family became furious when COFO asked that her room be given to a married couple, who needed the privacy it afforded. "Nobody goin' to move in here. That your room," an angry Mrs. Amos told Belfrage. The neighbors of the family Irene Paull was staying with were astonished to find her washing the dishes after dinner, but much to Paull's relief, the woman she was staying with found no need to defend what Paull was doing. "Can't you see, I've gone and got myself a white girl," the neighbors were laughingly told.

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Such personal triumphs were not enough to give the Summer Project the immediate political success COFO wanted in voter registration, nor would the memory of them be enough to prevent the civil rights movement from dividing along racial lines later on. Even over the course of the summer, there would be severe tensions between the Northern volunteers and COFO staff. The COFO organizers felt their leadership threatened by the volunteers, who at times seemed to take over rather than integrate themselves into a project, and they resented the fact that, despite the years COFO had been in Mississippi, the volunteers were the ones the media focused on. The volunteers in turn were often startlingly oblivious to the way their complaints—say of a misspelled press release—could cause the COFO staff pain, and for many of them the attention they received from the media seemed only natural in light of the fact that they had chosen to come South. "Often they seemed annoyed when we proposed new ways to register voters or to establish Freedom Schools. When we complained about their attitude, it became apparent that they could not imagine how deeply they had hurt us," Vicksburg volunteer Paul Cowan would write in his autobiographical *The Making of an UnAmerican*. "They mistook our arrogant assumption that we could show them how to transform Mississippi's institutions for a Machiavellian desire to control the movement. We, in turn, saw their quick, wounded assertion of authority as brutish rejections of the selves we so desperately wanted them to use."[7]

In a summer that began with the disappearance of Schwerner, Chaney, and Goodman and before its end would include more than a thousand arrests and thirty-seven church burnings, the readiness of the volunteers to spend three months in Mississippi and in the process mount voter registration drives and establish Freedom Schools for 2,500 students was, however, no small accomplishment.

With the passage of the Civil Rights Bill of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the South would, as a result of the pressure the Summer Project helped generate, never again be the same. Not only would segregation in public facilities end, there would be an equally dramatic turnaround in voter registration. In Mississippi black voter registration would go from a 1964 low of 6.7 percent of those eligible to 62.2 percent by the start of the 1970s. Most of all, people would stop saying the Deep South couldn't be organized.

THE CHANGES THE SUMMER PROJECT produced were not confined to the South. Although most of the volunteers would leave Mississippi by the end of August, Mississippi would not leave them. The majority had come not as ideologues but as young men and women drawn by the need to be useful. Middle-class college students, who could afford to take the summer off and pay their transportation and living expenses, the volunteers saw their commitment to the Summer Project as a way of legitimizing the comforts they had known since childhood. "As to why we're going down, if anyone gave a simple answer, I'd be suspicious," said Sam Walker, a University of Michigan senior. "Part of it is the American dream, you know, and part is shame." What the volunteers found in Mississippi was a life far worse and a federal government far more tolerant of injustice than they had imagined. Without planning to, they became politicized, and by the end of the summer, they discovered there was no settling back into a routine of dates, exams, and football games.

THE LETTERS THE VOLUNTEERS WROTE as the summer came to an end show how profoundly they were affected. "There is a certainty, when you are working in Mississippi, that it is important for you to be alive, and to be alive doing just what you are doing," a Radcliffe volunteer wrote. "Whatever small bit we did for Mississippi this summer, Mississippi did ten times as much for us. Working there has given me a clarity about what I want to be learning in college that three years in Widener Library could not give." Friends their own age now seemed naive, and like the young World War I veterans of Ernest Hemingway's short stories, the volunteers felt alienated when they tried to talk about their experiences. "In St. Paul, I talked to twenty college students, their bland white faces in a circle around me," a Minnesota volunteer wrote. "I was passionate, and

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later I thought, how comic and grim, how can the Mississippi Delta exist for these kids except as a fairy tale, because getting into one reality means cancelling out the other reality."

Above all, there was the anger. "Everything we did this summer could have and should have been done by the Federal government," Frank Cieciorka bitterly noted. "It is difficult to avoid a touch of cynicism when you realize the government is putting so much effort into supporting unpopular regimes abroad that it had to leave the enforcement of the Constitution to college students in Mississippi."

Alone in the North, cut off from one another and from a civil rights movement that, in the words of SNCC chairman John Lewis, would be increasingly "black controlled, dominated, and led," the volunteers were never again to make a collective impact. In Berkeley, California, student leader Mario Savio would draw on his Mississippi experiences in leading the Free Speech Movement. "Last summer I went to Mississippi to join the struggle for civil rights. This fall I am engaged in another phase of the same struggle, this time in Berkeley," Savio would tell a campus audience during a sit-in.[8] But for most of the volunteers their next political involvement would come as they blended into the antiwar movement or committed themselves to local poverty issues. Their continuing belief in the ethic of the early 1960s and the distinction so many of them drew between it and the counterculture of the late 1960s would, they discovered, be a liability.

THEN, AS NOW, THERE WAS NO WAY the volunteers, who never totaled as many as a thousand, could influence opinion by their weight of numbers. The nation would remember the Kennedy men as "the best and the brightest" and celebrate the Mercury astronauts for having "the right stuff." But even as the 1960s drew to a close there would be no sentimentalizing the volunteers' Mississippi experience. That was too troubling. One had to acknowledge then that, for all it achieved, the Summer Project still needed a completion. If the day-to-day lives of those it was designed to help were to change, a Third Reconstruction—in which the aim was nothing less than the economic transformation of black America—was required.[9] □

The author was involved in the civil rights movement in Alabama in 1965 and in Mississippi in 1966. This article is taken from a forthcoming book, *Mississippi Summer 1964*.

Notes

[1] Internal memos, publications, and statements by SNCC staff and volunteers are taken from *SNCC Papers* (microfilm). See Reel 39: Bob Moses, "Letter to Parents of All Summer Volunteers"; *Security Handbook*; Irene Paull, "I Got Myself a White Girl"; and Reel 2: "Statement by John Lewis," Staff Meeting, February 1965.

[2] Senator Stennis quoted in the *Washington Post*, June 25, 1964.

[3] See *Klan Ledger* in Elizabeth Sutherland, ed., *Letters from Mississippi* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1965), p. 119; Don Whitehead, *Attack on Terror* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1970), p. 103; and William McCord, *Mississippi: The Long Hot Summer* (New York: Norton, 1965), p. 48.

[4] The best source of published letters from the volunteers is Elizabeth Sutherland's *Letters from Mississippi*. I have used it, and I have also quoted from unpublished material from the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. These include letters from Jan Handke, Clark Gardener, Stephen Bingham, Nancy Schieffelin, Mike Clurman, Jacques Calma, Lisa Vogel, Robert Feinglass, Eugene Nelson, Howard Zinn, and Frank Cieciorka.

[5] Geoff Cowan, quoted in Paul and Geoff Cowan, "And Three Letters from Mississippi," *Esquire*, September 1964, p. 106.

[6] Sally Belfrage, *Freedom Summer* (New York: Viking Press, 1965), p. 75.

[7] Paul Cowan, *The Making of an UnAmerican* (New York: Viking Press, 1970), pp. 39-40.

[8] Mario Savio, "An End to History," in Massimo Teodori, ed., *The New Left* (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1969), p. 159.

[9] See C. Vann Woodward, "What Happened to the Civil Rights Movement?", *Harper's*, January 1967, p. 34.

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Liberalism & the Crisis of Authority

New Shapes of American Politics

We take pleasure in reprinting from New Perspectives Quarterly, *published in Los Angeles, the following discussion with Daniel Bell, professor of sociology at Harvard, Walter Dean Burnham, MIT political science professor, and Michael Sandel, professor of government at Harvard. Nathan Gardels, editor of* NPQ, *opens the discussion. Because of space limitations, we have omitted the second section. The first and third parts appear below.*—EDS.

From the mid-1940s through the mid-1960s, a consensus held in American society presided over by the Liberal Establishment. Generally speaking, that consensus comprised an internationalist orientation; a belief in New Deal social policies and Keynesian economics; and in culture, a *Father Knows Best*, WASP, patriarchal dominance.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the anti-Vietnam War New Left, the counterculture and the women's movement began fraying the authority of that Establishment from the left. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, the populist tax revolt, the New Right, and cultural conservatism finished it off by attacking from the other side.

If this antiestablishment, populist revolt of the last two decades has destroyed the authority of the Establishment, where will a new consensus and enduring elites emerge to provide cohesive leadership for the future? What social forces will bring them to the fore? These are the central political questions as we head beyond the Reagan era.

Daniel Bell There are many different dimensions to the so-called Liberal Establishment, and also to the question of what succeeds it.

First of all, the Liberal Establishment is an amorphous term that mixes in different things. It may mean the New Class proposition of Irving Kristol that we are dominated by the liberal professionals; or the Old Left view that we were dominated by the Eastern Republicans of Wall Street. Both are seen as part of the Liberal Establishment.

Then, there is the more specific reference to the development of a political class that was blown apart by the Reagan wing of the Republican party, which came to power opposing that political class's fading authority.

It is probably most useful in the context of this discussion to talk about a political class. For example, when Richard Nixon used to attack the Liberal Establishment, he was voicing resentment of this liberal political class, although, ironically, he drew from it in the person of Henry Kissinger.

A political class is a group of individuals from a similar social stratum, with like-minded views and a sense of responsibility for governance. There can be quite sharp disagreements on political issues, often discrediting one side or the other, but the class maintains the continuity of society. In England when Chamberlain was discredited, Churchill stepped forward. This country never had a truly political class until we began to develop one after World War II.

There have now been two generations of this class. The first was the Wall Street financial and legal group—people like Stimson, McCloy, Dillon, and Lovett, with Nelson Rockefeller on the political side. The second generation was professional elites who joined the public service—McGeorge Bundy, Walt Rostow. The Vietnam War was undertaken by that nascent political class. It tested them and they failed.

Now, looking at the question of leadership and the elites that may emerge on the basis of social and political attitudes, this becomes difficult to translate into specific political terms because there are two axes. One is an economic

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axis divided by the left and the right. The other is a cultural axis divided by traditionalist and modernist. Abortion, school prayer, sodomy, and so on are fixed along the cultural axis.

Furthermore, those who are left or right on the economic issues are not always left-modern and right-traditionalist on the cultural issues. For example, working-class authoritarianism complicates a possible alignment today. Blue-collar workers may be "left" on economic issues, but pro-Reagan and for traditional cultural values. At the same time, there are Eastern Republicans and California entrepreneurs who are very "right" on economic issues, yet culturally modern or libertarian.

In political terms, the question is which axis overrides the other at any particular time. If the issue is a clear-cut economic one, we may be certain which way things will break. But in a period when the economic issues are blurred and cultural questions come to the fore, as has been the case for the past few years, leadership on these issues passes into the hands of the aggressive characters of a Jerry Falwell, a Pat Robertson, or a Jesse Helms.

Walter Dean Burnham The new deal era was ideal for maintaining both permissive and traditional values. Most of today's issues were inconceivable as national issues. The federal government did not make any demands on private morality, pornography, or other cultural themes. Abortion had not been nationalized. Even in the 1920s and 1930s, when there was a great deal of economic liberalism and even radicalism, the culture was profoundly conservative.

It was only after World War II that the liberalization of the culture occurred and cultural issues were politicized. I suspect it had much to do with the cultural contradictions of tradition and modernity being woven into the economic contradictions of accumulation versus consumption. The upheaval caused by affluence on tradition and community, as well as the Keynesian emphasis on credit and consumption-led growth, spilled over into the culture. If restraints were off on the economic side, why not in one's personal life?

Also, at a time when the American economy was hegemonic throughout the world, positive-tremendous growth rates of the postwar period, business elites were satisfied with their terrific profits while the well-being of the average Middle American was rising as well.

It was in this context that we had, for a relatively brief moment—the Camelot moment—an equipoise with consensus about the evils of the dirty Russians just after the dirty Nazis, a consensus about social-harmony liberalism, and a situation where folks hadn't yet come out of the closet and cultural issues weren't nationalized.

Now, cultural issues and economic issues are mixed together in politics with alternating importance and even substitutability. When the economy is bad, that's the issue. When the economy is good, something else is the issue.

In the 1920s, the early 1950s, the late 1970s, and now in the 1980s, the economic issues are not front and center. Efforts to propose alternatives fall apart because there is either prosperity or no apparent threat to prosperity. In periods like this, when society is constantly undergoing stress linked to economic and technological progress under affluence, and because of the amorphous quality of our politics, religious and conservative revitalization movements come to the fore.

If we ask ourselves what is likely to occur today, we can look to previous conservative revitalization movements that appeared at times of stress and readjustment. In good old populist American fashion, William Jennings Bryan united the victims of the 1893-94 economic collapse, and then in 1925 was the fundamentalist defender of creationism at the Scopes Monkey Trial.

In the 1920s, modernity came in wholesale with the shift to a largely urban society. With the rise of secularism and science, the age-old conflict between science and religion acted itself out over evolution. In fact the present decade reminds me a lot of the 1920s.

What also happens is that issues with an important economic reach can be transubstantiated into symbolic or religious issues; Reagan's talk of a Christian nation, and the cultural conservatives' response to the relative decline of the U.S. in the world economy by patriotically invoking imagery from 1952, are examples.

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Life was simpler in the 1930s. There was general economic disaster and a sense that government was part of the answer, not the problem. That alternative seems to be foreclosed today; so many, looking around at the mess the society is in, turn to some sort of God—seeking to solve the problems in their lives.

Bell To tie these shifts back into the question of the fallen authority of the Establishment, we must start from the widest social context—the breakup of White Anglo-Saxon Protestant hegemony.

The breakup of WASP dominance came after World War II for a number of reasons. Discrimination against Jews broke down and Jews then performed one of the most remarkable feats of social mobility in history. There was the civil rights movement which actively brought blacks into society.

The 1960s helped bring an end to patriarchy. Beginning in this period, the number of women going to work contributed substantially to the breakup of male domination. The very phrase "proper role of women" is a phrase unlikely to be used today.

In a sense, the general questioning of authority spreads from this changing role of women. If the oldest forms of social authority are questioned, then all forms of authority are open to question.

Burnham The woman's role is now regarded as a matter of choice. If it is a matter of choice, there can be no proper role and, therefore, no valid moral sanction in trying to apply standards of that kind. This now applies across the board on a whole range of questions having to do with authority, respect, duty, and what is "proper."

Bell The status of women, then, is the one culturally fundamental, structural change that marks a departure from the past. It is the one irreversible element. A lot can be reversed: even black gains which may be split, with a substantial black middle class in contrast to a disoriented and much larger underclass.

Republicans will not be able to come to terms with the women's issue. To the extent they have tried, with Phyllis Schlafly for example, it's in the wrong direction. Although the NOW movement may have gone too far in the other direction, they are pulling back. Betty Friedan represents this "second-stage" pullback.

The politics of the future will have to come to terms with this permanent change in the status of women, which is also reflected in the labor market. The Democrats did take the initiative in nominating Geraldine Ferraro for Vice-President. In principle it was a good idea, although the particular choice may not have been right.

Burnham This is an exceedingly important point. Survey data in the 1980s show that, after having narrowed in 1984, the gender gap has widened again to about 10 points. The Democrats are leading again, in terms of general preference statements. That's almost exclusively because women are more sympathetic toward Democrats than Republicans. For men, it is almost a dead heat.

The change in women's roles also has economic consequences tied to the decay of American economic hegemony over time. Americans don't want to go backward; they don't want to give up the American Dream. Today, the American Dream requires two wage earners in the family.

The massive movement of women into the work force also means that women are more heavily concentrated in the health and public-sector professions than are men. Since nurturing professions like health and teaching are heavily dependent on public funding, women have a greater need for government. This is one thing the Republicans will have to consider in their wholehearted attempt to demolish the social-support role of the state.

Finally, women are more economically independent because they are bringing in their own incomes. This really changes things from the good old *Leave It to Beaver* days. The cultural conformist image of 1952 is dead as a dodo. The Republicans have not even begun to come to terms with the social and economic advances of women.

Bell The changing status of women is fasci-

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nating from a sociological angle. Women are the only rising middle-class group in America because of their previous status and because of the opportunities open to them. For example, in the next 15–20 years, half of the university professoriate on the permanent tenure level may be women. In basic numbers, the new professional-technical class is a women's class. Eighty percent of all new jobs since 1980 have been occupied by women. According to current labor force data from the Census, the whole new middle class is basically a women's movement.

This unrealized fact has many implications about what kind of society we will have and what kind of stake women have in it. Many women are increasingly dependent upon caring functions outside of the home in order to be able to go to work. Services like child care depend upon government expenditures or nonprofit institutions. And, as already mentioned, proportionally, large numbers of women are going into public or nonprofit sectors, such as the health and teaching professions. The group has not yet crystallized, but they are a potent element of any future equation of power.

Burnham Here again we see the political transubstatiation that crosscuts constituencies. Issues such as sexual preference or abortion intersect with the deeply held religious commitments of others who are in the same economic situation. Since these preferences are nonnegotiable, they distort classic expectations of left and right, or of party allegiance.

Similar issues undermined the integrity of the Democratic coalition. Now the Republicans will have their turn. They will have to deal with the kinds of problems that are far more than a mirror of male-female relationships. They will have to deal with tensions between people who are economically orthodox but culturally laid-back on the one hand, and the religious-cultural right on the other.

There will be, for example, a lot of cutting and thrusting on the part of Republican elites to try and manage the tensions created by the potential candidacy of Pat Robertson.

Bell Although the rise of women is independent of the fall of the Liberal Establishment *per se*, the two come together to the extent that the elite group's general authority came under question at the deepest social level, which also created a focus for other kinds of resentment.

This is why the crisis of the political class becomes so important. The political class is the overt spearpoint of the Establishment. When that class failed, stumbled, and simply fell apart over Vietnam, then there was no one to defend the notion of an Establishment. Who today defends the notion of an Establishment? Nobody.

And of course, without an Establishment, who carries forward the continuity of the society? Without continuity there is no stability. Without stability, people don't know what to expect.

This failure of the directing political class helped to blur the salience of economic and cultural issues in politics. This happens when people have lost their reference points and society feels adrift from its moorings.

This failure of elites to exercise authority is the most troubling residue of the great social changes in the postwar period. The notion of authority in the social sense is pretty much gone in this country. That's why we have the rule of celebrity, of notoriety and personality.

I am convinced this vacuum is the source of the traditionalist sentiments of Reagan voters as well as the more raucous reaction of the Moral Majority, New Right, and Christian Right, the return-to-basics movement in education, and the effort to set forth a moral rhetoric as the scaffolding of political legislation. It is a return of the repressed.

If the 1970s saw a revolt against authority, the 1980s are seeing a revolt against modernity—a strong cultural current that has been gathering force worldwide. If there is a common thread to this revolt against modernity, it is the emphasis on continuity and tradition, and a reaction against secularism and the universalism that was the utopia of the Enlightenment.

The history of American politics and culture is the recurrent tension between traditionalism and modernity. Traditionalism has its roots in the small-town life of America and its fundamentalist Protestantism. Modernity is the expression of liberal and cosmopolitan attitudes in the cities.

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Paradoxically, the reaction to modernity can only be contained by the restoration not of social authority, but by both the earned authority of the political class and the moral authority of the Establishment. . . .

Michael Sandel Our predicament goes back to the New Deal. That was the last time there seemed to be a public philosophy able to animate public life.

The strategy of FDR and the New Deal was to rival the concentration of power in the national economy with a similar concentration of power in the federal government.

This theory of countervailing power, however, did not stand alone. It was coupled with a political theory that had been part of progressive politics from the early part of the twentieth century. The New Dealers drew the insight from Progressives that, to build a modern democracy, it was not enough to centralize government, it was also necessary to nationalize politics. That project is now exhausted, and we are struggling to find out why, and what might take its place. But it is important to appreciate how politically ambitious an undertaking such a project was.

In order for democratic control to be effectively located at the level of the nation, it was not enough to develop new structures and institutions, but also, through political education, to recast the meaning of democratic citizenship on a new scale. A sense of national citizenship had to be cultivated to underwrite and legitimate the extended involvements of centralized government and national economic institutions.

FDR appreciated the need to cultivate a new kind of citizenship. Insofar as people drew their collective identity from public life, it was important that they conceive the community as located not simply in neighborhoods, small towns and even cities, but primarily in the nation. The nation would become the first source of collective identity and allegiance—the primary political community. So, the New Deal public philosophy had two parts—to centralize government, and also to enlarge the meaning of citizenship, to nationalize politics.

The exhaustion of the New Deal liberal agenda has come with the success of the first part of the project, but the failure of the second part.

The second part of the project failed because the nation proved too vast a scale across which to cultivate the shared understandings and common involvements necessary to political community in the traditional sense. Except in extraordinary times, such as World War II, or the Great Depression, or in such fleeting moments of collective crisis as the Iranian hostage situation, it is difficult to see ourselves as participants in a shared national identity. Gradually this realization set in, yet the structures of economic and political life were already inescapably located at the level of the nation—and even beyond it.

Burnham And, of course, without a national citizenship, the structures were bound to become illegitimate, as they have become.

Sandel There was for a time, and there is now, an attempt to legitimate national institutions without national citizenship. Rather than a national political community of shared purposes, the other legitimating aspiration has been the ideal of the "neutral state."

The "neutral state" is the idea that the vast social, political, and economic arrangements of the welfare state should draw their justification not from the idea that the nation embraces a shared conception of the good, but instead from the idea that a just society is one that does not try to impose on its citizens any particular conception of the good. A neutral state does not try to cultivate civic virtue. Nor does it tie the obligations of the welfare state to a sense of national community or civic engagement. It seeks instead a framework of rights that is neutral among competing conceptions of the good life. Individuals and groups are simply left to pursue their own interests and values as long as they are consistent with similar liberties for others.

Burnham This was basically the notion of "interest-group liberalism" in political science. Such a politics was entirely process-oriented and uninterested in substantive results that might benefit some sectors of the society over others. The system maintained its legitimacy

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as groups were satisfied through marginal and incremental adjustments.

One of our great problems today is that the game continues. The process of groups coming back again and again for another slice of bread has been institutionalized in the "iron triangle" of lobbyists, insiders, and legislators—the interest-group Liberal Establishment against which populism has revolted.

Sandel This is symptomatic of the inability to cultivate a national citizenship capable of sustaining a shared notion of the common good. The ideal of the neutral state seemed the only alternative.

At the level of legislative politics, the neutral state takes the form of interest-group pluralism—the idea that there is no public good apart from the preferences of individuals and the interests of such groups as may organize to press their claims.

Burnham Public interest was viewed as a metaphysical term that couldn't really be applied in practical politics. . . .

Sandel . . . where the public interest is no more than a disconnected collection of individual interests.

But the welfare state has not only been sustained by interest-group bargaining at the legislative level. There is also a judicial expression in Supreme Court decisions and in administrative agency rulings concerning rights and entitlements.

These decisions often enforce the idea that government may not favor one conception of the good over others.

So there has been an aspiration to neutrality both in the principles that define the individual rights and in the policies that result from interest-group liberalism.

What is striking, then, is that the welfare state has two legitimating ideals—an original one and a new one that increasingly predominates. The original one was that the welfare state expresses the mutual obligations we owe as fellow citizens who share a common life. That is the one that has receded and lost much of its force, although it is not completely dead. The new one is the idea of public provision of rights and entitlements for the sake of freeing people to pursue their own interests and ends.

Burnham There are several practical examples, especially in the context of the race issues of the 1960s. There was no attempt to deal with the larger question of citizenship education and a great failure to explain what the federal government was trying to do. So, many political entrepreneurs at the beginning of the populist revolt, like George Wallace, encouraged the feeling that "we weren't being included" at the national citizenship level. They were cut out of the action.

But things got worse. Public policy dictated that a certain person was favored because of race, and the little guy affected was expected to suffer while the wealthy elites were out doing their own thing. It was like Judge Garrity saying that Boston must integrate. But Garrity lives in Wellesley where he doesn't have to worry about the consequences.

This was a really poisonous mixture that ultimately resulted in delegitimation of liberal efforts. Perhaps the old New Deal was neutral in the sense that everyone got the same specific thing while Great Society programs targeted specific groups to get specific things.

Much of the Reagan revolution was, in fact, to do away with the Great Society, not the New Deal. The Great Society was one of the few great policy revolutions in modern times that had no concrete referent in what public opinion wanted. The revolution begat the counterrevolution at the level of activist politics.

My parallel point concerns making the state both strong enough to do its job and democratically legitimate enough to develop nationalized citizenship. To show how far we've gone in the exact opposite direction, we are unable to find a national politics of any kind in the 1986 elections. Nothing links the variety of campaigns together at the gubernatorial or local levels. That is the empirical result of having no public philosophy.

The neutral state idea breaks down because the pressure of built-up change vectors requires policies that are very hard to justify in terms of neutrality. If we want to do something in the general interest—like an industrial policy in which some zero-sum decisions must be

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made—we don't have the mechanism to develop a national consensus. The paradox paralyzes us.

Sandel There is a sense in which the ideal of the neutral state *is* the public philosophy. The question is whether it is an adequate philosophy.

That the neutral state is the reigning public philosophy can be seen in the fact that it is not the sole philosophy of one party or the other. On the contrary, it underlies the political argument between the two parties and sets the terms of debate.

For example, the political debate between the Democrats and the Republicans in the decades since the New Deal has increasingly become a debate between rights-oriented egalitarians, commonly known as liberals, and rights-oriented libertarians, or conservatives. What they disagree over is which rights are necessary to realize the ideal of the neutral state. That's what divides them.

Rights-oriented egalitarian liberals defend the welfare state on the grounds that we need to provide people with social and economic rights in order to respect their dignity as autonomous agents capable of choosing their own preferred lives.

On the other hand, rights-oriented libertarians say that property rights and the efficient functioning of the market economy will best allow individuals to choose their own conception of the good.

What both sides in this debate fail to address is the growing sense in the electorate that, notwithstanding the expansion of individual rights and entitlements in recent decades, we're less in control of the forces that govern our lives rather than more. And this, it seems to me, is the source of much of the frustration with the prevailing political agenda.

The prevailing agenda neglects two important political concerns. One is the question of political community. The debate about rights has not been rooted in any meaningful sense of commonality or belonging, which accounts for the proliferation of rights and entitlements without a corresponding sense of social obligation or civic engagement.

Secondly, the debate over rights fails to attend to conditions necessary to a vital democratic life. The political institutions that come to the fore in the neutral state are institutions like the judiciary and the bureaucracy. These institutions are designed, in principle at least, to be insulated from democratic pressures, and so better able to define and defend individual rights. Despite their great importance in such areas as civil rights, these are not democratic institutions.

So, both political community and the democratic prospect are neglected insofar as the public philosophy of the neutral state defines our political agenda.

The rise of populist frustrations has to do with the erosion of a sense of community and, with it, a perceived erosion of democratic possibilities. The post-World War II generation that was weaned on unrivaled American power in the world, and unprecedented opportunities for consumption at home, now finds that, individually and collectively, we are less in control of the forces that govern our lives than we had imagined.

Gardels The point of cultural conservatives is precisely that the idea of the neutral state is insufficient. They argue that the traditional values and morals that made this country great ought to be promoted by government if we are going to stem the social decay unleashed by the permissive, tolerant or, in your words, "rights-oriented" philosophy.

Sandel I completely agree that the insight of cultural conservatism has been to grasp the inadequacy of the public philosophy of the neutral state and to address questions of tradition and community in politics. But it is only a partial response because it fails to take account of the economic developments that led to the concentration of power in the bureaucratic state in the first place. This is the problem with Reagan's attempt to revitalize federalism.

While the conservative critique has been alive to the concentration of power in the federal government, it has been blind to the effects of concentrations of power in the corporate economy. The Democratic party has been more responsive to the issue of concentrated economic power, but far less responsive to the

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consequences for democracy of the federal bureaucracy.

Gardels Cultural conservatives are trying to give a substantive conception to what the state ought to do. To quote Paul Weyrich: "God's truth ought to be manifest politically"; or "Government should support moral truths."

Burnham Just recently, after the death of Len Bias from cocaine, the president of the University of Michigan said, "We just don't really believe it is our job to try to dictate our students' private lives." Secretary of Education Bennett replied, "Why not?"

Sandel The way to address the cultural conservatives is not, as many liberals do, to deny that politics has anything to do with morality, or to refuse to defend a substantive conception of the common good. That is a great weakness.

Gardels All right, but then what happens when we attempt to define what the common morality should be on a range of questions: abortion, homosexuality, sodomy, parental authority, pornography, the role of women?

The absolutes for cultural conservatives are clear because they are given by God. Thou shalt not kill therefore thou shalt not have an abortion. What does the wisdom of classical political theory have to say about that?

Bell The conservatives are incosistent. If they believe in the privatization of business, they should believe in the privatization of morals. If they don't want abortion, they should also be opposed to the death penalty.

Sandel The liberal reply to the Moral Majority should not be to flee moral argument but to engage in it. The idea that the state shouldn't legislate morality is something that many liberals reflexively invoke. But what about the civil rights laws? They legislated morality—a morality of inclusion that insisted on the full membership of a group wrongly excluded from the common life of the nation.

Burnham But civil rights was directly the state's business—who gets to vote and doesn't get to vote. Even a libertarian would agree. However, if we're talking about bedroom issues where legislation may be contemplated to get us back to God's truth, it's a different arena.

When civil rights moved beyond voting rights to affirmative action and busing, it entered very controversial areas in terms of the common good.

Sandel The cultural conservative have too narrow a notion of the place of moral argument in politics. Abortion and pornography are not the only issues that invite moral reflection. What about broader questions of social and economic structures such as the Catholic bishops addressed? We forget now that the central political question in the 1920s and 1930s was how to reform the political economy so that democratic ideals could be preserved.

People like Justice Brandeis believed it was necessary to decentralize the power that had gathered in the corporate economy. Others argued that only centralized planning with a larger role for the state could preserve democratic government. It turned out that neither of these structural reforms prevailed.

What prevailed was Keynesian economics, which was neutral on the question of the good because it simply accepted preferences as revealed by consumers. Rather than reform the structure of the economy on the basis of some vision of the common good, the state would seek prosperity by managing aggregate demand.

In fact, a politics that worries about the common good and addresses moral questions will also have to worry about defining citizenship and giving meaning to democracy in the face of large-scale social and economic structures.

Bell I'm not sure I like the phrase "the common good." It implies a unitary concept and, being a good liberal, I want to "reserve" a number of areas from such a conception.

I would substitute the phrase "the public good." Civil rights, for example, are a matter of public access. They are part of a public good.

I see it this way not only as a liberal, but as a Jew. It is very worrisome when a particular conception from one tradition, as Weyrich sug-

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gests, is imposed on the whole society. This country was founded on the rejection of the idea that there is a unitary truth that can be imposed on the entire society. The wars of religion were, in effect, wars of truth. We traded that in for toleration, a notion far more important for a society than that of a single moral truth.

I also think the most important thing is to avoid the politicization of cultural issues. Economic issues and interests are negotiable. Since moral issues are nonnegotiable, they can only tear apart a society. The politicization of cultural issues has been one of the greatest dangers in recent years.

For example, personally, I'm against abortion, but that should be purely a private matter. Thus, no claims should be made on public monies. Moral issues should be detached from the public realm. No society can exist if we take nonnegotiable political and moral issues and politicize them. I find the approach of Education Secretary Bennett horrifying.

The notion of a "common good" implies a public debate on moral issues. I would prefer to expand the private space as a way of building a liberal and tolerant society.

Gardels But conservatives would say private acts have public consequences. They cite AIDS. The link, conservatives argue, is that character and self-restraint have traditionally ruled social behavior. In a consumption-oriented society, neutral morality sanctioned by the state encourages lack of self-discipline, permissiveness, and the pursuit of immediate gratification. This is why Secretary Bennett asks if schools shouldn't be engaged in character building.

Sandel If the only way of reintroducing substantive conceptions of the common good implies the imposition of unitary truths, then I'm against that too, but I don't think it is enough simply to invoke the distinction between the private and the public. What counts as private and what counts as public has long been the subject of political debate. It was once argued that sweatshops and child labor were "private" arrangements, not public concerns.

It is easy, in retrospect, to define the civil rights movement as a question of public morality, but at the time the segregationists claimed, "If I own a private lunch counter, it is my business who can sit there."

We can't escape making arguments about what properly counts as private and what counts as public, and the resolution of those arguments will ultimately depend on some moral conception of the common good.

Burnham Well, it will depend on what balance of political forces develops on any particular issue.

Sandel But the legitimacy of the outcome will depend on the persuasiveness of the arguments—the moral arguments—that support it. To decide what is public and what is private requires some conception of the common good.

Burnham I would also strive for maximum tolerance in these matters because they are not negotiable. They do tear away at the consensus in society to the extent they are propelled into the public arena in any way other than a neutral way.

I must also agree, however, that the problem is an enduring one. After all, do we have a state that stands for nothing?

Until it bogged down and became exhausted, the old interest-group liberalism could claim its own process legitimacy—explosive issues were kept out of the public arena; public sector activity was kept to tangential, negotiable relations among people, preferably those that could be monetized.

The difficulty in maintaining some sort of comity in a pluralistic society should not be underestimated. This is just too big a country to be run by a single standard, even something as broad as the Judeo-Christian ethic.

Sandel I think that traditional positions between liberals and conservatives break down over questions of community and morality. Conservatives may be quick to say that the local community should decide about pornography but less ready to let the same community restrict plant closings. So the agenda should be larger than the one the religious right puts forward.

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It is also not clear that the state *can* succeed in depoliticizing cultural issues. The political influence of the religious right is symptomatic of a public life so drained of common meanings that it is vulnerable to those who would interject their own narrow, intolerant moral conceptions to fill it.

A democratic conception of the public good would address itself precisely to this vulnerability that is the legacy of the neutral state. The discourse is so impoverished that when we debate "ethics in government" we're reduced to talking only about the private peccadillos of public officials.

Burnham That is why citizenship education is of such concrete importance to the preservation of a democratic civil order. The New Deal public philosophy provided some of this, but only a limited amount, and not for long.

The problem is a serious one. It is hard to imagine how public political education can go on in a country as large as this without the institutions and motivation to do so. It's easier to wheel and deal or to trot out archaic symbols when things start getting out of hand.

I have a strong sense that new institutions and mechanisms need to be built, but, in the absence of concrete developments that shape opportunities for moral engagement, it is hard to see how the building process is going to develop. The context in which people listen is simply not there.

Gardels I can see community-oriented liberals being comfortable with Ft. Wayne deciding not to close a plant. I can't see them being comfortable with the banning of *Catcher in the Rye* from the high school library.

Sandel It is unavoidable in a democracy that moral and political arguments be addressed to some particular community. The question is what are the relevant communities, and for which purposes?

We can no longer afford to take for granted that the answer to that question is, for *all* purposes, the nation state. And, if the price of that recognition is that communities will exercise their democratic prerogatives in ways we disagree with, then we need to organize better politically.

We will continue to insist on certain rights, but we can't avoid addressing the question of how to revitalize a sense of commitment and civic engagement in the various communities to which we belong and on which a vital democratic life depends.

Gardels Our definitions of the common good tend to be pretty vague once we leave the domain of public issues like plant closings and look at questions of right or wrong, or of character and virtue.

We can see the difficulty of trying to come up with values that aren't relative in the modernist, secular culture of this pluralistic society. Yet the disorienting fluidity of values is precisely what calls for a response.

The idea of tolerance doesn't seem to do the trick. Tolerance is a vacuum, not an integrating principle.

Sandel It's not so much that tolerance is a vacuum; the problem is that tolerance is not self-interpreting or self-implementing as an ideal. Tolerance is no substitute for a vision of the common good; it presupposes one.

Bell I dissent vigorously from the statement that tolerance is a vacuum. In abstract political philosophy, the Aristotelian or Rousseauian view that a community requires a conception of a common good is quite right, but such a conception is premised on the principle of a homogeneous cultural community. Only Japan approximates that kind of community today; every other society is a plural society.

This is why the Kantian conception of toleration and due process, a procedural republic, so to speak, becomes the sociological condition of civil order. The crucial political problem is how to maintain a functioning polity without the conformity of an imposed common good on the one hand, or a fragmentation of interests on the other.

Burnham That is the predicament of liberalism. □

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Martin Kilson

Jesse Jackson and Black Politics

What Is His True Role in American Politics?

With this article we continue our discussion of the Jackson phenomenon in American politics. For other points of view see comments and reviews by Joseph Clark (Summer 1984), Julius Lester (Winter 1985), Peter Connolly (Winter 1987), and David Garrow (Winter 1987).—EDS.

Jesse Jackson as a leading left-of-center political force is again receiving a lot of attention. There are numerous concerns about Jackson: Does he have a legitimate function in black American politics? A legitimate function in American politics? Given his deployment of a black ethnic appeal, does he not weaken the mainstream Democratic alliance which, to win elections, must attract moderate whites? Does his private (self-serving) agenda contradict his public (other-serving) agenda?

But I am less concerned with answering these questions than with locating the Jackson phenomenon in American political culture.

Here are some starting points for grappling with this important matter.

The metamorphosis of black politics from protest to mainstream (nearly 7,000 elected officials and several times that many appointed officials and technicians) is steadily tripped up by political crosscurrents from what I would describe as black solidarity forces (hence my phrase: solidarity crosscurrents). The political posture of these black solidarity groups is usually anti-establishment, offering social proposals that are more egalitarian than mainstream politics.

Typically, these black solidarity crosscurrents appear as episodic responses to particular situations. In style they are often militant, and they are usually under charismatic leadership, sometimes secular but often quasi-religious. Examples include the off-and-on attempts to form an independent black party, or the political assertions of ethnocentric groups like the Black Muslims, of which the Farrakhan faction has recently been the most visible.

Politically, such solidarity crosscurrents often seem more residual than fundamental. Their style of action may strike one as more important than the sometimes overblown purposes they purport to serve. Yet this does not necessarily negate their appeal. Why? Because black solidarity crosscurrents contain a powerful and appealing political symbolism.

They project group-unifying images—images associated with blacks' traditional status as victims and general marginality. They convey an oppositional style that generates a powerful aura. When activated and packaged by a charismatic leader, this anti-establishment militancy takes on the dimensions of a *ritualistic rebellion* with a special appeal to those Afro-Americans who consider the American power system stubbornly negligent of black claims to parity.

WHAT IS THE POLITICAL FUNCTION of this ritual rebellion? The rebellious element in black solidarity politics is highly selective. On the one hand, it expresses alienation from an established system. On the other, its spokesmen reveal their fidelity to the established system's overall capitalist structure.

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For example, the militant Black Muslims, during their heyday under Elijah Muhammad in the 1960s and 1970s, were extensively involved in small businesses and propagated a gospel of aggressive capitalist enterprise. Similarly, our most prominent black solidarity politician, Reverend Jesse Jackson, is linked to extensive capitalist enterprises through his brother Noah Robinson, who, according to data in the April 1986 *Black Enterprise*, has a Wendy's franchise that in 1985 ranked third nationally in profits, put at $2 million. Thus, what I call the ambivalent posture toward the established system—employing antisystem rhetoric while sharing the system's political-economic values—clearly characterizes the ritual rebellion of black solidarity politics. It is quite nonrevolutionary, no matter how disruptive it may appear to be.

There are several long-run political functions to this rebellious pattern: (1) It provides a crucial outlet for alienated sentiments among Afro-Americans; (2) It sustains real political intercourse at any given time between mainstream politics and those blacks who experience the pangs of alienation, even if such political intercourse is ritualistically denigrated; (3) It provides gradual legitimation of the established system's basic structure by encouraging alienated blacks to find their own equivalent water-level, as it were. Even such emotionally estranged groups as the Black Muslims find their "legitimating" water-level. Nor is this pattern of legitimation for estranged sectors uncommon in American political culture. All ethnic groups have felt its force in some measure.

1. Jesse Jackson and Solidarity Politics

THE MOST PROMINENT AND SOPHISTICATED instance of solidarity crosscurrents is associated with Reverend Jesse Jackson. The particulars of the Jackson style need not detain us here. They are described in Adolph Reed's recent book *The Jesse Jackson Phenomenon* (reviewed in the Winter 1987 *Dissent*), which offers a provocative analysis and solid data on Jackson's politics. But Reed's analysis differs from mine in that he sees a discrepancy between Jackson's charismatic style and the requisites of an effective black politics as harmful to black needs. By contrast, I view Jackson's politics as an avenue of systemic adaptation for sizable numbers of alienated blacks.

Utilizing national Democratic primaries as its main framework, Jackson's ritual-rebellion politics appeals to two constituencies—one system-opposed, the other system-linked. Jackson's appeal has antisystemic overtones, often leftist or progressive. Functionally, however, his political style supplies a powerful stimulus or encouragement to a major part of his constituency which, because it is emotionally estranged from the system, needs this expression for its ongoing politicization. After all, Jackson's ritual-rebellion politics is conducted through establishment agencies and institutions—party processes, electoral arrangements, etc.

At the same time, that sector of Jackson's constituency that is linked to the system has an instrumental relationship to Jackson's politics. This is a key sector in ritual-rebellion politics. It both rationalizes and transforms Jackson's politics, aiding in the delicate task of disciplining it and harnessing it to mainstream politics.

Thus Jackson sits at the command center of his movement, flanked on one side by cathartic networks (his system-debunking constituency) and on the other side by *realpolitik* networks (a system-inclusive constituency). The *realpolitik* networks are already committed to the system but demand greater inclusion; the cathartic networks require protracted adaptation to the system; and the two together supply the dynamic of Jackson's politics. The skill or lack of skill with which Jackson calibrates these coexisting and competitive networks determines the gains he achieves or fails to achieve.

Although there is no intrinsic reason to expect constant or major successes from Jackson's ritual-rebellion politics, Jackson's effort does contribute fundamentally to broadening the pluralistic politics of American society. In this respect his politics can be seen as an extension of the civil rights movement's earlier expansion of pluralism in American society.

The importance of this function—the broadening of pluralistic politics—cannot be overemphasized. For this function is typically shortchanged in American political culture,

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owing to a deep-rooted tendency for claimant groups (e.g., labor, farmers, small businessmen, the women's movement, etc.) to press for particular bread-and-butter claims rather than systemic ones. This means that new processes making for political inclusion and equal mobility occur unevenly for various groups.

Such groups, because they are ideologically at ease with the main patterns of American society, seldom integrate their bread-and-butter claims with systemic claims. Each group's advance is, then, followed by a return to integration within the system. But if the system is not to rigidify against new claimant groups (blacks for example), then it must constantly be nudged or assailed through political pressures. The Jackson phenomenon is a current example.

Indeed, without a perpetual recurrence of this dynamic, the capacity of the American system to correct differentials of mobility and power (a remediation that is typically steady-state rather than one-time or revolutionary) weakens enormously. This phenomenon is understood well by the best leftist critics of American society, such as C. Wright Mills, William Domhoff, Peter Baratz, Michael Parenti, Michael Harrington, and John Gaventa.

Ethnic solidarity crosscurrents as a mode of sustaining political pressure are hardly limited to blacks. They are quite American in character, for after entry into mainstream politics most ethnic groups acquire political and social interests (and anxieties) that are susceptible to solidarity-type politicizing. But whites and blacks differ here in some fundamental respects. Black solidarity crosscurrents mainly serve liberal and offensive goals (that is, broadening and strengthening black mainstream politicization). Solidarity crosscurrents appearing among Irish, Jews, Italians, WASPS, etc., tend, after a time, to serve conservative and defensive purposes (that is, socially restorationist and establishmentarian goals).

This is precisely what the general neoethnicity trend among white ethnics since the late 1960s and 1970s, spearheading the right-wing victories under Reaganite Republicanism, has been about. These solidarity crosscurrents took the form of expanding Zionist-Jewish perspectives among Jews, a tendency related not merely to Israel's needs but to anxieties over the societal fluidity caused by post-industrial changes—a shift essentially cosmopolitan, antiparochial, and life-style-innovative. This, too, is what the militant antiabortion and antifeminist agitation among Irish Americans has been about—traditionalist strata seeking greater order and control vis-à-vis the new freedoms and new life-styles introduced by post-industrial society.

Since the early 1970s, WASP culture—mainly its redneck-WASP variant—has outstripped other white groups in prominence and political effectiveness, skillfully deploying such crosscurrents at the local and national levels to favor establishmentarian and right-wing politics. Jerry Falwell, Jim Baker, Jimmy Swaggart, Oral Roberts, Pat Robertson—all clergymen—demonstrate the influence of charismatically articulated solidarity crosscurrents. Robertson, leader of the wealthiest and largest right-wing religious-political organization, is mounting a bid for the 1988 Republican presidential nomination. More important, however, has been the shrewd dovetailing of redneck-WASP, Catholic, and Jewish *solidarity crosscurrents* into the right wing of national politics; all of this under the charismatic guidance of President Reagan.

2. Blacks' Future Coalition Options

We can see much political significance in the overlapping time frames of black and white solidarity crosscurrents. In the short run, the white solidarity crosscurrents are hostile toward 1960s-1970s inclusionary and government redistributive trends—trends that have been crucial for blacks during the past twenty years of sociopolitical mobility. And this, given the past decade of successful right-wing politics, is of course unfavorable for public policies that advance black needs.

In the long run the black political class—functioning through the Congressional Black Caucus, the associations of black mayors and local officials—must help to liberalize the moderate sector of white voters, a sector now cleverly manipulated into the Reaganite Republican electoral coalition. While this task is hardly easy—given these voters' quiet accep-

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The Black Vote in Four Senate Races

		Whites, others	Blacks
Alabama	Percent of total	79%	21%
	Shelby (D)	38	88
	Denton (R)	61	7
Louisiana	Percent of total	69	29
	Breaux (D)	39	85
	Moore (R)	60	12
North Carolina	Percent of total	82	16
	Sanford (D)	43	88
	Broyhill (R)	56	8
California	Percent of total	90	9
	Cranston (D)	47	82
	Zschau (R)	50	10

Based on CBS News Polls conducted Tuesday in Alabama with 1,300 voters, in Louisiana with 1,158 voters, in North Carolina with 1,171 voters and in California with 2,544 voters.
Source: The *New York Times* (November 6, 1986)

tance of plutocratic patterns in our political economy—it must be pursued nonetheless. Because of their tendency to sharpen confrontation positions on redistributive policy issues, black solidarity crosscurrents are under special obligations in this process. Simply put, the new obligations of Jesse Jackson's movement involve taking on a greater pragmatic definition. This must include repackaging its redistributive economic concerns in ways that tie in with the emerging transethnic strategies of the black political class.

A decade ago Charles Hamilton was one of the first analysts to recognize the need for "deracializing" the redistributive policy concerns of blacks; and from today's vantage point such a strategy is best viewed as a repackaging of blacks' redistributive concerns. Certainly there are large numbers of white Americans whose concerns make them potential allies in a black-influenced process of gaining more attention for distributive inequities in American society.

If the results of the 1986 elections do indeed suggest that the Democratic and Republican parties are now splitting the white vote down the middle (exit polls recorded 33 percent of white voters claiming Republican identification, 39 percent Democratic, and the remainder Independent), then the emerging role of black voters as a balance of power should help achieve a transethnic repackaging of redistributive policy concerns. This is especially so in the strategically crucial South—itself now balanced between parties—where moderate and liberal white voters combined with black voters to help return the U.S. Senate to Democratic control. As shown in Table 1, when joined by an 85 percent-plus black vote, there are enough moderate white votes to elect Democratic Senate candidates in Alabama, Louisiana, and North Carolina (and also in the largest Western state, California).

It is increasingly realistic to see a convergence of blacks' redistributive policy concerns with moderate and liberal whites' needs so that new political alliances can be formed—short-run, perhaps on a case-by-case basis, but alliances nonetheless. According to *Washington Post* columnist David Broder, even the moderate Republicans in the South, looking toward the post-Reagan era, understand the need to garner their share of black votes. Commenting on Republican Senator Mack Mattingly's reelection campaign in Georgia, Broder observed that "Mattingly endorsed Larry Thompson as the first black U.S. attorney in Georgia, supported sanctions against South Africa, the extension of the Voting Rights Act, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday bill. This year [1986] he plans to open headquarters and do targeted mailings in black neighborhoods."

There remains the task of nudging, pressing, and even assailing the stand-pat elements in the American power structure around the many redistributive inequities facing black Americans. This task is one in which Jesse Jackson and other black solidarity critics of mainstream black politics have a legitimate role to play. □

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Bogdan Denitch

Neither Bellicose nor Helpless

A Democratic Left Proposal for Defense Policy

It is impossible to discuss U.S. defense policy without locating it within an examination of foreign policy in all its ramifications. A discussion that limits itself to questions of technology and hardware on the one hand, or grotesque costs on the other, misses the point. A defense policy that wastes resources through badly conceived policies that are not in the overall interests of the country is too expensive no matter the actual cost. In a genuine emergency no one will cavil at the cost of legitimate defense. With respect to military hardware, the question is not whether superbomb "x" is umpteen megatons more powerful than superbomb "y," but what is its purpose and how is it to be used to further a legitimate policy?

I share the biases (however recent) of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops: nuclear weapons directed at civilian population centers are intrinsically illegitimate. I can think of no legitimate goals that would be advanced by mass nuclear destruction. Nuclear weapons as an "acceptable" element of a defense policy are already shrouded in the tatters of mutual deterrence policy. Nuclear weapons can be justified only to the extent that they lead to their own demise: that is, nuclear weapons should serve as leverage for negotiations combined with unilateral initiatives that lead to the abolition of nuclear weapons.

The political debate on U.S. defense policy proceeds in a minefield of implicit assumptions. I begin with three: (1) Defense policy should be designed to create a situation in which mutual cutbacks in armaments will not so endanger either partner (in the present relationship between the two superpowers) that it becomes politically impossible to proceed. Mutual cutbacks are required, but a great deal of room exists for unilateral initiatives; more bluntly, cutbacks on the part of the United States. These cutbacks are not a "reward" for Soviet good behavior but are in the best interests of the U.S. itself. (2) The U.S. has a legitimate interest in lowering the tensions between the two military alliances, NATO and Warsaw Pact, encouraging the independence of both Eastern and Western Europe. (3) A multipolar rather than a bipolar world is not only a safer place but serves U.S. defense policy best. Put another way, the U.S. cannot have a legitimate defense policy if its purpose is to use force, implicit or actual, in order to maintain an unjust and unequal relationship between the Third World and the industrialized world. Quite simply, there is no legitimate "defense" interest that requires interventions in the smaller colonial and ex-colonial nations of the Third World, above all in Latin America and the Caribbean. There may be all kinds of reasonable political, economic or strategic American interests in those areas. However, armed force has proven to be a singularly blunt instrument for any decent policy.

The Dangers We Face

Following these assumptions let us look at both the real and fictitious dangers that the United States faces—*any* United States, not only Reagan's. The balance of forces between the USSR and its alliance on the one hand and the United States and NATO on the other, is either even or tilted grossly in favor of the U.S.-NATO alliance in all significant weapons systems except one. And that one—main battle field tanks—matters less and less, given modern weapons technology. The two alliances are asymmetrical in that NATO represents an alliance of major industrial powers with major

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capacity to produce and sustain advanced military technology, whereas the Warsaw Pact depends almost entirely on the USSR. The West German army, for example, fields more than half of the effective manpower of the alliance in Europe. France, while not formally in NATO, is obviously a part of the Western alliance.

The Warsaw Pact alliance is based on grudging, reluctant partners whose troops are probably unreliable for anything but internal repression, with the exception of the Soviet and, perhaps, Bulgarian troops. The Hungarians would probably be delighted to fight the Rumanians, the Rumanians the Hungarians, the Poles the East Germans and the Russians, and the Czechs no one at all—which might be a mark of that nation's higher cultural level. When one speaks of balance of forces we too often forget that both alliances deploy the bulk of their forces in Europe. This is an intriguing and promising fact since at the present time the least likely place for a conflict to break out is in Europe. And a European conflict that could be localized lies in the realm of fantasy. If that is so, then really major cutbacks in the military forces of *both* alliances are obviously possible and consonant with the security needs of both sides.

THE NEWLY BORN HAWKS, in the Democratic party and among some writers in the *New Republic*, argue that the U.S. has worldwide interests which require a worldwide projection of force and that it is precisely in the Third World that the West, however one defines it, is militarily weak. That's a tricky set of propositions. Most of these "interests" are illegitimate and, in any case, not militarily defensible. For example, what is the "legitimate U.S. interest" in Angola? Is that interest best represented by the oil rigs guarded by Cuban troops and by other U.S. business interests, or by the U.S.-armed Savimbi guerrillas who are trying to blow up the same oil rigs? The "freedom fighters" who are trying to topple the Angolan regime are hardly devoted to a pluralist parliamentary democracy. Flipping the coin, the presumably Marxist-Leninist government of Angola is more than anxious to trade with the U.S. and Western Europe, risking the clutches of the capitalist world market. So too Mozambique and most Third World regimes that use Marxist-Leninist oratory as the language of nationalism and modernization. Whatever interests the U.S. might have in the Third World are almost totally irrelevant to a military build-up. For example, it is not at all clear that thirteen, fourteen, or sixteen aircraft carrier battle groups are *in practice* a useful projection of military power in ways that were available to the very substantial U.S. naval power of the early Nixon, Ford, and Carter years. The extra carriers have not added to U.S. credibility as a superpower. Doubters are advised to reflect on the slaughter of the U.S. Marines in Lebanon and the huffing and puffing, with a hefty dose of terrorism thrown in, in the case of Libya. In both cases the mountain labored but produced a mouse.

The sole recent U.S. military success suggests a second point. Whether under Carter or Reagan, we hardly needed to prove that the United States could intervene in Grenada. The waste of power and money in the Grenada episode is sharply illustrated by comparing it with the British intervention in the Falklands. Both episodes originated in scandalous policies. That aside, it is clear that Britain, with its more modest forces, intervened more successfully against a more powerful foe. Grenada is thus a textbook illustration of what is wrong with the U.S. defense policy. To begin with, the invasion was unnecessary. Most of the Third World nations simply do not accept the U.S. as an impartial policeman, and rightly so. Second, it was carried out clumsily, in the most bureaucratic manner. The Army, the Navy, the Marines and the Air Force could not even communicate with each other. Ludicrous but true: the Army communicated with the Navy by using a pay phone in Grenada, since the radios were on different wave-lengths. The Navy refused to refuel Army helicopters carrying wounded Marines since there were no budgetary provisions for that contingency. And so on. What would have happened had anybody actually wanted to defend Grenada!

If NATO does not need building up and if a Rapid Deployment Force (which would utilize

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units from all the services) would be a blundering liability in the Third World, where does that leave a U.S. defense posture? What remains is a triad: strategic nuclear forces, an enormously expensive Star Wars dream, and a Navy with more admirals in it than at the height of the Second World War.

As to the first, it is clear that under this administration, and with the tacit blessing of most Democrats in Congress, the U.S. has abandoned even the pretense of seeking parity with the USSR. It wants superiority. When Henry Kissinger still had sensible things to say, he asked "What on earth does one do with superiority?" How does it translate into leverage for negotiations? What on earth can you do with the ability to destroy Russia fifteen times rather than merely five? The gruesome, if tacit, agreement by the superpowers to hold each other's civilian populations as hostage for good behavior, or mutual assured destruction (MAD), was less insane than a policy directed toward a usable edge in a nuclear arms race. Such a usable advantage presumes that the weapons are indeed to be used. With the relative capacities of both superpowers, anyone who proposes such a policy is certifiably insane.

Some Modest Proposals

A REASONABLE PROPOSAL in this area would call for a drastic cutback, beginning with the complete elimination of the MX, Pershing and Cruise missile programs, and a voluntary rollback of strategic missiles by at least 50 percent, with an invitation to the other side to do likewise. To the extent that we maintain a strategic nuclear capacity at all, and for the foreseeable future it clearly will be maintained, a desirable goal would be to put it all on submarines—and out at sea. Interservice rivalries that require a triple threat of land, airborne, and naval strategic missiles serve no purpose. Second, with respect to the Navy, we can dispense with admirals fantasizing a replay of the Battle of Midway. Most of the battle carriers should be honorably retired, perhaps turned over to a world organization for emergency rescue and relief missions, since they could serve little other useful purpose. It is true that the hundreds of communities that depend on Navy procurement orders will be hard hit, to which we can only say that we need a full employment policy that does not depend on building useless weapons.

The third specific defense problem is Star Wars. Star Wars involves so many problems that it is hard to know where to begin. This much can be said: the fundamental problems are conceptual and political rather than technological. As a pessimist, I will assume that at monstrous cost, some Rube Goldberg contraption called Star Wars can be gotten off the drawing board. But what would it achieve? There is no more destabilizing development in the competitive relationship of the two superpowers than something that clearly gives the U.S. a major advantage in the nuclear rivalry.

The whole idea of a system that could defend "substantial parts" of the United States (shorthand for the command and control centers, i.e., Washington) is truly frightening. It would remove one of the minimal factors that has so far constrained our Dr. Strangeloves: the fear of mutual suicide. If the nuclear rockets should be used as weapons instead of instruments of deterrence, which is bad enough, the prospect is truly terrifying.

The problem with Star Wars is not merely that it would profoundly alter the balance of power between the U.S. and the USSR, and create an unholy temptation for a quick Soviet first strike. The real problem is what it tells us about what the decision-making elites in Washington think of the alliance called NATO. In whatever version, Star Wars is conceived as a defense *of the U.S.* What could be more frightening to West Europeans, already shaken by this administration's tendency toward unilateral adventurism?

The proper thing to do with Star Wars is get rid of it, just as the proper thing to do with nuclear weapons is to begin with drastic cutbacks leading to their abolition. A cynical observer might say that nuclear weapons, particularly intermediate-range nuclear weapons, are a cheap alternative (financially and politically) to the advantage that the Warsaw Pact has over NATO in conventional forces. There is in fact no such advantage. And even if there were, the way to overcome it would be to

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increase the conventional forces of NATO and the U.S. It should not be difficult to negotiate mutual cutbacks given the deepening Soviet shortages in skilled manpower. However, to maintain a conventional balance that is credible even with drastic cutbacks on both sides, a viable reserve system is required. And that, in turn, requires the politically all-but-impossible notion of conscription—universal military training—with allowance made for broad alternative service. It would have to be truly universal, extended to both sexes.

Granted the cutbacks, one major question remains. What *is* an appropriate defense establishment for a democratic world power? Can such a defense establishment be left to the professional military and to a volunteer force, the quality of which depends on maintaining high unemployment among eighteen to twenty-four year olds? Is is reasonable for a democracy to have a defense establishment staffed by the poor, the unemployed, and minorities? Would not the U.S. public be a great deal more sensitive about how and where troops are deployed if those troops included the sons and daughters of the middle classes?

Universal military service for males and females would provide more than sufficient resources for any reasonable defense policy. Therefore, relatively short terms of service would be possible and such a citizens' army would go a long way toward demythologizing the entire subject of defense, especially if accompanied by the broadest policy of alternate service. Such policies already exist in a number of European countries. The inclusion of women is particularly important, since veteran privileges and benefits have been one of the major weapons for maintaining gender discrimination in government employment. A nonprofessional military force would also tend to break down the caste divisions that are inconsistent with a democratic society. All this could be supplemented by civilian officers modeled on the Swedish, Swiss, and Israeli reserve systems.

If peace is too important to be left to the peace movement, national defense is too important to be left to the military. Some might object that such a civilianized military establishment would be more difficult to deploy in a number of situations. For instance, one might hesitate to use U.S. troops on the white side in a conflict in South Africa. That makes the idea of a civilian army all the more attractive: It is worth remembering that the Algerian war ended very soon after the conscripts and reserve officers started to be used in it. The professional military conspiracy to overthrow de Gaulle for making peace in Algiers was broken by these same reservists in uniform, while the elite units proved disloyal.

Those who pay attention to mass culture will have noticed an almost endless series of films and television shows that repeat the theme of the betrayal of our boys in uniform by wimpy civilians. This is one of the prices we pay for having a military that serves society but is not a part of it.

Steps to a Democratic Foreign Policy

THERE ARE AT LEAST FOUR sets of issues involving security and defense that have nothing to do with weapons systems yet are crucial to any genuine security. Together these propositions offer an outline of an alternative: a democratic foreign policy that democratic socialists can propose.

Full employment. The morale of the population is a major factor in any conception of security. Presumably we want security for a decent, humane, and democratic society. Therefore, an indispensible part of any security policy has to be an egalitarian full-employment policy, above all for the young entering the work force, since they are the very people expected to defend the society from external aggression. *Egalitarian* full employment is not merely "full employment," which dooms blacks, women, and other minorities to unemployment or underemployment at miserable jobs. Full employment, properly understood, should serve a society which is, and is seen to be by its members, just and fair.

There is a further dimension to the question of full employment within the framework of security and defense policy. No matter how profitable for private capital it might be to export basic industries to where labor is

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cheaper, no serious world power can think of itself as secure if the fundamental instruments of production, essential to maintaining a major industrial power, are no longer at home. That requires an industrial policy that would maintain manufacturing capacity in steel, shipbuilding, and general tool manufacturing and slow the tendency to a "service society" which trades skilled and unionized jobs in basic industry for jobs in hamburger stands. An industrial infrastructure would also be good for the country since a transition from one type of economy to another serving only the appetite for profit has had enormous human costs, some of which are visible in the changing character of the volunteer army we now have.

In the good times, or not so bad times, of the early Carter era what was wrong with the army was that it was recruited out of the slums and Appalachia and reflected the problems of those two areas: low literacy, and a high affinity for liquor, drugs, and violence. Today, in the high-unemployment era of this administration, we are presumably reassured that whatever else happens it has had an excellent effect on improving the quality of the recruits who are now high school graduates or better. This is not exactly reassuring. The only proper army for a democracy is a citizens' army and the only citizens' army worth talking about is one where all citizens share in the obligation of defense. For one thing, it might concentrate their attention on foreign policy and peace issues in a way that the trivialization of defense issues by this administration has not.

Third World Needs. The second general area to explore would turn on radically altering the U.S. posture toward the developing countries, particularly those of Latin America and Africa. It surely should not require something as improbable as the advent of a democratic socialist government to realign U.S. foreign policy so that it contributes positively to what the Third World needs. Briefly: The U.S. should move toward "forgiving" the bulk of the Third World debt since it is not only uncollectible but any serious attempts to service that debt by Third World countries imperils democratic stability far more than any combination of pro-Moscow guerrillas or right-wing military hoodlums. The reason is quite simple. Any attempt to service the debt requires draconian cutbacks in social spending in already poor and fragile societies as well as rollbacks in low living standards. One cannot attempt to service debts in the Third World without smashing trade unions, lowering living standards of the professional middle classes, and squeezing the peasants into monocultures that can generate some hard currency in a world market which has been bleak at best for most of the present decade. Forgiveness of Third World debts will surely do more to shore up democratic and reform regimes than any projected Rapid Deployment Force. The Rapid Deployment Force is supposed to deal with the consequences of the collapse of friendly and democratic regimes in the Third World. Only in the Ramboesque fantasies of the Ollie Norths can a lightly armed Rapid Deployment Force be adequate to face any serious military opponent such as the Soviet Union, Cuba, or the Vietnamese. The Rapid Deployment Force, one of the keystones of defense thinking of both the administration and congressional Democrats, is intended to intervene in so-called brush wars in the Third World; that is, in those wars where the guerrillas, or the opposition, appear to be winning against U.S. client regimes. Preventing situations that lead to such breakdowns is a far more reasonable way to proceed. It is not only more reasonable, but would indirectly help the overall U.S. economy, since regimes freed of the burden of unrealistic interest might start purchasing badly needed industrial goods from this and other countries.

IN ADDITION TO FORGIVING the loans, the U.S. has to redefine its relationship toward regimes which call themselves socialist, Marxist-Leninist, or revolutionary in the Third World. Saying this in no way implies that these societies are awash with human rights, democracy, and harmony. The issue here is solely the relationship of such societies to the legitimate defense needs of the United States. Whatever the ideological claims of such governments, they have proven more than willing to maintain friendly economic relations with any U.S. administration that makes the least effort to do so. They haven't fallen in love with capitalism as a

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system or with the U.S. as a world power. What it comes down to is that the only aid the Soviets have been willing to provide consistently to Third World regimes has been weapons. The governments of Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, and Guinea have discovered that ideological affinity for Soviet authoritarianism is of little use when it comes to economic development.

Centralized economic planning, the second item of Soviet export, has proved a disaster in those economies; the only conceivable source of technological aid and industrial goods has been the West. The Chinese and Yugoslav governments have been more than willing to assert their independence from the Soviet bloc. And aid and trade with the West have widened the gap between these governments and Soviet policies. The Sandinistas in Nicaragua and the government of Angola, despite their political stance, have repeatedly stated their desire for normal relations with Washington. The situation calls for major pressure on the Democratic House and Senate to alter present policy, if only for symbolic value. A side benefit would be the cutting off of financial aid to the various thugs sponsored by this administration in those two countries. It might accomplish little in economic terms, but it would most surely improve U.S. standing in the Third World.

Allies. The third element is the relationship of the U.S. to its allies. The primary alliance is in Western Europe, where the damage done to the United States by the Reagan administration has been clearest. Almost single-handedly the Reagan administration has managed to shake the previous consensus around Atlanticism and NATO. This administration has succeeded where generations of left-wing activists have failed. It has convinced the majority of the European social democrats and democratic socialists to radically rethink their relation to NATO and the United States and to begin pursuing alternate, and, in my view, far more appropriate foreign and defense policies. I work here with certain assumptions. One is that socialist, labor, and social democratic parties are the only viable alternative governments in Western Europe. They are a permanent part of the political scene. Therefore, their move toward unilateral initiatives in promoting a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe and a nuclear-free Britain is an enormous step forward. As it happens, it is also in the best interests of the United States. That is, it is in the interest of the United States that the pressures of confrontation between the two military blocs in Europe be lowered. Any decoupling of sections of Europe from the cold war is, in and of itself, a good thing. After all, the Soviets and the United States account for the bulk of the military resources in the European theater. It follows that major cutbacks in the military theater will have a substantial impact on military budgets.

The present proposals of the German Social Democrats for a nuclear-free belt in Central Europe would create a nuclear-free zone from Sweden through Central Europe, Austria, and Yugoslavia to the Mediterranean, physically separating the two superpowers and lowering the possibility of military confrontation and escalation. This administration's recklessness and insistence on the Star Wars strategy, even at the expense of potential major breakthroughs in disarmament as the aborted conference in Iceland showed, surely has gone a long way toward convincing the Europeans that *their* security cannot depend solely on the Alliance's U.S. senior partner. Conversely, it should at least raise certain questions among the more serious U.S. policy makers about whether or not it is time to begin thinking of a more autonomous and independent Europe that is outside the confrontation between the superpowers.

To elaborate slightly. NATO was conceived of as a defense against a probable Soviet sweep to the Atlantic in the late 1940s and early 1950s. That scenario of a mass sweep by Russian tank armies is today probably the *least likely* of all scenarios in the foreseeable future. There are a number of reasons, not least of which is a shifting military technology that has permitted such massive destruction of tank armies that Egypt and Israel were capable of losing more tanks in the Sinai War than Germany and the Soviet Union did in the greatest tank battle of World War II. Dwell for a

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moment on this mind-boggling fact and think about what it implies about the probability of tank armies sweeping across the North German plains.

What the Soviet Union needs from Western Europe is technology, and the West European economies need trade. An adventure, which is what an invasion of Western Europe would be, is not in the cards. Nor does the possibility of a limited war in Europe make political or military sense. Too much would be at stake. The French nuclear deterrent (or, as they call it, the Force of Dissuasion) clearly dictates that such a war could not be contained within a conventional framework.

All of this leads to the possibility of pressing for a radical lowering of the military posture by both superpowers in Europe. And that could lead to the most radical of all demands: the withdrawal of *both* U.S. and Soviet troops from European soil. Surely, the Western industrial democracies are stable enough not to require U.S. ground forces and equally clearly the withdrawal of Soviet military forces from Eastern Europe should be a major negotiating goal.

More generally, the times call for a policy of détente rather than confrontation in Europe.

A POLICY OF DÉTENTE not only maximizes the security of both the U.S. and the USSR but has historically proven to be the ideal backdrop for liberalization and reform in the authoritarian societies of Eastern Europe. Whatever U.S.-USSR confrontation may be good for, it has proven terrible for dissidents and reformers in those societies.

A convincing case can be made that it is in the genuine interests of the United States and the world that these societies be reformed and modernized rather than pushed against the wall. It is hard to imagine a case for the administration's apparent belief that an arms race, which began in what can be called Cold War Two, would not only give the U.S. a military edge, but would create intolerable pressures on the Soviet regime that would bring that regime to the brink of collapse. More likely, these pressures would increase the weight of the authoritarian and military factions within Soviet society. In short, the present military build-up has exacerbated precisely those aspects of Soviet society that make it most threatening.

Realism and Détente. The last point to be made here is that détente through negotiation is not a reward for Soviet good behavior but a good in and of itself and consonant with U.S. interests. Unless we understand that no disarmament treaty, no arms control agreement that is not to the mutual benefit of both superpowers, is worth the paper it is written on, we will continue to be trapped within the hazards of Cold War Two. That is, we will be trapped in the idiotic assumption that because the Soviet Union is led by a bunch of authoritarians with a powerful military establishment we should not negotiate with it. To the contrary, precisely *because* the Soviet Union is a dangerous world power we must negotiate with it. We have to think of the benefits we can derive from negotiations rather than look at them, as this administration has done almost exclusively, as a propaganda exercise.

Finally, a systematic set of agreements between the USSR and the U.S. in the areas of greatest world tension would permit both sides to build down from their present military postures and make the world safer. It would make it safer not because the superpowers endanger it by the mere fact of having arms but because it would sharply limit the ability of the U.S. or Soviet allies to engage in the sort of provocative behavior that would trigger off a local conflict that could then expand. A whole range of outstanding problems would remain. The relationship between the U.S. and the USSR would remain competitive. All that we can hope for is to channel that competition in such ways as to lower the pressures for military buildup and decrease the danger of conflict. The needed transformation of Soviet society and American society so as to assure a peaceful world is a long-range project. In the short term, the urgent task is to undo the damage caused by the bellicosity of this administration and to move toward a decent noninterventionist democratic foreign policy. □

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André Liebich

Marxism and Totalitarianism

Rudolf Hilferding and the Mensheviks

In April 1940 the Paris-based Russian Menshevik journal, *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik (SV)*, published an article by the famous Austrian Marxist Rudolf Hilferding entitled "State Capitalism or Totalitarian State Economy?" Hilferding argued that the Soviet Union should be understood as the harbinger of a new type of social formation—totalitarianism—and that the emergence of such a formation posed a major challenge to Marxist theory.

This was not of course the first reference to totalitarianism, even among socialists. Nor was this the first assertion, even from Hilferding himself, of an underlying similarity between Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, and Bolshevik Russia. It was the first time, however, that a major Marxist theorist posed in such clear-cut terms the problem of the relation between Marxism and totalitarianism and sought to resolve this problem by integrating two modes of analysis which had been, and were to remain, mutually hostile. As such, Hilferding's article marks a milestone both in Marxist theory and in the theory of totalitarianism.

My thesis here is that Hilferding's article was the culmination of a prolonged debate within Italian, German, and Russian émigré socialist circles concerning the applicability of Marxist categories to the historical processes they were witnessing. Hilferding's formulation of a theory of totalitarianism offered a solution to the problem posed by the inability of Marxist analysis to account for the nature of the Soviet Union. This formulation emerged from Hilferding's own interpretation of the German experience but was decisively influenced by the Russian socialist (Menshevik) analysis of Soviet development. An examination of the arguments and issues involved in the crystallization of Hilferding's position and of the Menshevik contribution to this process may not only cast light on what, I would suggest, is a continuing impasse in Marxist analysis of the Soviet Union but may illuminate the foundations of the theory of totalitarianism as well.

I will first trace the Russian socialists' attempts to interpret the Soviet experience in Marxist terms as well as efforts, by Russian and other socialists, to relate the development of bolshevism and fascism to already existing categories. I will then try to show why and under what circumstances the concept of totalitarianism came to be seen as a common theoretical solution to the dilemmas posed by two very different historical developments. Finally, an examination of Hilferding's own evolution towards adoption of a theory of totalitarianism will attempt to bring into sharper focus the theoretical assumptions underlying the concept of totalitarianism and the historical conditions of its emergence.

The Mensheviks Abroad

The Menshevik analysis of Soviet Russia in the 1920s and 1930s was the work of a uniquely dedicated and talented group of party members. After the party had been driven underground in 1921, the focus of its activity shifted abroad. A Menshevik "Foreign Delegation," with its center first in Berlin and, after 1933, in Paris, continued to speak on behalf of the party. Headed initially by Iulii Martov and then by Fyodor Dan, the Menshevik party abroad followed a policy of limiting its membership only to those individuals who could claim to have been party members in Russia. In spite of the restrictive, indeed suicidal, implications of this policy, the party was able to draw on the unstinting services of a number of figures familiar to anyone acquainted with the history of the Russian Revolution or with the

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historiography of the Soviet regime: Fyodor Dan, Rafael Abramovitch, Boris Nikolaevskii, David Dallin, Solomon Schwarz, and others.

The principal activities of the party abroad consisted of publishing a biweekly journal, *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik*, as well as a number of other publications in various languages, and of representing Russian social democracy within the revived Second International. In both these areas the exiled Mensheviks scored successes despite the very limited means at their disposition. *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* acquired a reputation as an authoritative source of information about Soviet Russia; it was the first, for instance, to publish parts of Lenin's "Testament." In a period when information about Soviet Russia was rare, Western chancelleries read *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* carefully. Above all, *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* was appreciated by Western socialists for its impeccably orthodox Marxist analyses. Many of the Mensheviks' foreign-language publications were actually written for the benefit of Western socialist parties. Within the Labor and Socialist International too the exiled Mensheviks were considered authoritative spokesmen on all matters related to the "Russian Question." Thanks to their political skills the Mensheviks obtained entry into the highest councils of the International. Here, Mensheviks sat as formal equals with Western socialist leaders, including heads of government. Finally, by virtue of personal ties going back to prerevolutionary days and of their new reputation as "Sovietologists," members of the exiled Menshevik group found a vocation as formal or informal counselors to Western socialist parties.

THE POLITICAL ATTITUDE OF THE MENSHEVIKS was broadly defined by what was known as the "Martov line." This attitude developed out of the Mensheviks' perception of the need to struggle on two fronts: against all reactionary efforts to roll back the achievements of the Revolution; against Bolshevik efforts to rule without any concessions to democracy. The earliest practical implication of this attitude was Menshevik support for the Soviet state during the Civil War, even to the extent of calling upon party members to enlist in the Red Army. The same attitude found expression in Menshevik work abroad on behalf of recognition of Soviet Russia and in their categorical condemnation of any movements, conspiratorial, insurrectionary or other, aimed at overthrowing the Bolshevik regime. At the same time, the Mensheviks described the Bolshevik order as founded on terror and excoriated the Bolsheviks relentlessly for their incoherence, their incompetence, their corruption, their self-deception, and their deception of the masses. In the final analysis, however, the Mensheviks could not bring themselves to "break faith" with the Revolution. As Rafael Abramovitch put it, "we, admitting our Marxist incorrigibility, prefer the very worst revolution to the very best counterrevolution."

Within this overall outlook, the Mensheviks elaborated a detailed interpretation of the economic and political nature of Bolshevik Russia. The Menshevik economic analysis affirmed that the October Revolution had not fundamentally changed relations of production. The Bolsheviks' initial attempts to realize communism in a backward land with the help of terror and bureaucratic regimentation created not an economic system but only "paper dams" against the elementary working of economic laws. From the very beginning the Mensheviks prophesied that such defiance of economic laws would end in abject failure and that the Bolsheviks would be forced to retreat to capitalism. The introduction of the New Economic Policy (NEP) confirmed these forecasts, although their satisfaction was mitigated by the political repression against their party that accompanied the NEP as well as by the nature of this new capitalism. From the Menshevik point of view, Bolshevik surrender to a powerful private peasantry, legalization of private traders, and concessions to foreign capitalists were carried out in such an irrational manner that they undermined the positive achievements of 1917. Moreover, the failure to introduce political democratization negated not only Menshevik hopes but, in their view, created insurmountable new contradictions. A regime that was "proletarian only in ideology, petty proprietory in nature," and that sought to establish capitalist conditions but refused to relinquish its absolute power and its terrorist policies, represented such a self-contradictory

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hybrid that it could not long survive. As the Mensheviks saw it, the point was whether the regime would cede to democratic pressure or to the forces of counterrevolution.

A particular point in the Menshevik economic analysis of the NEP is of interest here because it was to become an important issue in the 1930s. This was the question of "state capitalism" as a theoretical description of the economic order in Russia. The term itself had already been employed by the Russian Bolshevik leader Bukharin to describe a tendency in advanced countries towards centralization and regulation of all economic activity under the aegis of the state as well as by Kautsky as a critical description of Soviet Russia. It was revived by Lenin to describe the NEP system in Russia where overtures to private industry were combined with the maintenance of state control over the commanding heights of the economy.

Lenin's (and, indirectly, Kautsky's) references to state capitalism evoked Menshevik criticism both as a description of conditions in Russia and as a theoretical concept. David Dallin pointed out that denationalization had reached such proportions that now local organs could undertake the decision to denationalize. Even as Lenin was promising no more concessions, Krupp was establishing itself in Russia. Even the "commanding heights" of the economy were being surrendered to private enterprise. Some sectors, such as transport, had already been publicly owned in tsarist times. In sectors such as foreign trade the state monopoly was a sham since foreign merchants were coming into Russia in droves. Heavy industry, still state-owned, had shrunk to such an extent that it was an insignificant part of the economy. Indeed, there were fewer than one-and-a-half million industrial workers, out of a population of 130,000,000, who were still employed in the state sector of the economy, and this sector was the most deficit-ridden part of the Russian economy.

On the theoretical level, Lenin's description of "the first socialist republic in the world" as a state-capitalist system seemed to rest on the dubious proposition that if the government called itself communist then the economy must be state capitalist. The implication of Lenin's statement, Dallin suggested, was that if one changed the government one would have only ordinary capitalism. For a Marxist, however, to determine the nature of a social formation on the basis of such purely political and formal criteria was inadmissible. Moreover, Dallin added, a socialist's attitude toward state capitalism as a positive or negative phenomenon had to be conditioned by two considerations: first, what were the economic effects of this system? Second, what was the position of workers within the state-capitalist system? According to pre-1914 socialist theory, the socialization of production was supposed to give a tremendous boost to productive forces. But what would be the effect of a socialization, such as that occurring in Russia, which was being carried out at the cost of productivity? Not only would the working class suffer but the very idea of socialism would be dealt a serious blow. According to Dan, there now were Bolsheviks who admitted the development of capitalism in Russia but were hiding behind the murky fantasy of capitalist production without private ownership of the means of production, or behind dreams of replacing a bourgeoisie by some sort of organizational intelligentsia at the service of the Bolshevik party. The theory of state capitalism was based on such ill-considered and harmful fantasies.

On the political level too, the Mensheviks put forth an integrated theory that revolved around the concept of "Bonapartism." As thoroughly imbued with the example of the French Revolution as many other Marxists, Bolsheviks included, the Mensheviks early debated whether the Bolsheviks could be classified as Jacobins, i.e., as an extreme or maximalist wing of the revolutionary movement, which in its own way and for its own purposes was nevertheless advancing the cause of the Revolution. Or, were the Bolsheviks merely Bonapartists who by assuming dictatorial power had put an end to a revolutionary or republican regime and had established a dictatorship not of a class but over classes? All the Mensheviks were in agreement that the only choice for the Soviet regime lay between democratization and a Bonapartist denouement to the Revolu-

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tion. If the Soviet regime continued to deny the democratic rights acknowledged in its own constitution, if the Russian working class failed to win its own class independence and initiative, not only would the retreat to capitalism fail to raise productivity (because of the continuing climate of insecurity) but "Bonapartism" in the sense of a post-revolutionary dictatorship would result.

The Menshevik Revision

WITH STALIN'S "GREAT TURN" OR "GENERAL line" at the end of the 1920s, the Mensheviks found their carefully elaborated interpretation of Bolshevik Russia under severe strain. As the Russian landscape changed under the twin blows of industrialization and collectivization, the ideological and political landscape of the Mensheviks changed as well. Initially, the Mensheviks were heartened by the fact that their prognosis concerning the internal contradictions of the NEP were finding confirmation; Stalin himself was seen by the Mensheviks (and by many Bolsheviks, including Trotsky) as the representative of a "centrist" faction. As it became clear that Stalinist policies represented a terrifying new wave of Bolshevik adventurism and utopianism, Menshevik hopes turned to disappointment and eventually to dismay.

It may be an indication of a certain paralysis in Menshevik thinking induced by the unexpected turn of events in Russia that it was foreign socialists who were the first to draw theoretical conclusions from the Stalinist Revolution. The first such challenge to the Menshevik vision of Bolshevik Russia came from the socialist patriarch Karl Kautsky. In a book published in 1930, Kautsky affirmed that under Stalin there could now be no doubt that Bolshevism had become Bonapartism. According to Kautsky, the Bolshevik regime had now bared its purely despotic nature, revealing that it had no redeeming political or social features, and thus any foreseeable overthrow of the Stalinist regime should be welcomed rather than feared.

This challenge to Menshevik thinking was still relatively easy to rebut. Rafael Abramovitch picked up the challenge with brio on behalf of the Mensheviks in an article published in 1930 in the leading German socialist journal, *Die Gesellschaft*. Abramovitch tried to pin Kautsky down on the question of whether the Bolshevik Revolution was a counterrevolution or simply the wrong revolution. More directly, Abramovitch questioned Kautsky's application of the concept of Bonapartism to the current situation in Russia. The concept of Bonapartism meant an antidemocratic liquidation of the Revolution by forces produced by the Revolution and in favor of newly formed owning classes. But there were no such classes in Russia. Bolshevism shared the forms and methods of Bonapartism but lacked the social basis of Bonapartism because there were no classes that could indefinitely enjoy the fruits of the Revolution and no stable social equilibrium could be established under the conditions existing in Russia. To take the example of the kolkhozes, or collective farms, socialists could not call them counterrevolutionary because, if they succeeded, socialists would welcome them. Socialists objected to the kolkhozes because they could not succeed, because they represented a new utopian venture, as well as a particularly cruel one (although Abramovitch stressed that their cruelty was a secondary consideration). Similarly, the Five Year Plan was not counterrevolutionary because it was not creating new possessing classes. Indeed it was destroying such incipient elements of a new possessing class as the NEPmen (just as collectivization was destroying the kulaks). The problem with the Five Year Plan was that it was destroying the economy as well and thus opening the door to a possible counterrevolution. To speak of true Bonapartism in Russia, the terrorist dictatorship would have to be filled with a capitalist content. There was an ever-growing danger of such a development but the process had certainly not been completed.

The second challenge to Menshevik thinking was far more formidable since it came not from the right wing of the Socialist International—whose critique of the Soviet Union, voiced by Kautsky and others, was familiar—but rather from the Socialist International's left wing, which had shared the Mensheviks' outlook. In 1931, the leading theoretician of Austro-marxism, Otto Bauer, whose personal and ideo-

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logical ties with several leading Mensheviks, in particular Fyodor Dan, were intimate, declared in *Der Kampf* that he was revising his earlier Menshevik-like views on Russia. Bauer admitted that he had considered the Plan utopian but now he realized that it had greatly strengthened Russian industry. He had considered collectivization to be a formula for total disorganization but, in fact, the harvest was improving. Even bourgeois journalists in Moscow were reporting that life was becoming easier. In the light of the experiences of the first three years of the Five Year Plan, Bauer declared: "[W]e must recognize that the Russian Revolution has not only extirpated the remains of feudalism but it has constructed the essential elements of a socialist order."

BAUER'S "CONVERSION" SHOCKED the Mensheviks profoundly. Among many reactions, Abramovitch's reply in *Die Gesellschaft* summarized the majority Menshevik position. Abramovitch accused Bauer of resuscitating the populist heresy that Russia could jump over the capitalist phase of development. In effect, Bauer was siding with Mikhailovsky, Tkachev, and Bakunin against Herzen, Plekhanov, and Engels. In a sense, Bauer was even giving support to the Stalinist view that socialism in one country is possible. The Mensheviks, on the other hand, did not believe the successes of current Bolshevik policies to be great or lasting enough to justify a revision in their basic point of view. Admittedly, the Mensheviks had underestimated the extent to which an absolutist regime could utilize human material bereft of all force of opposition. However, the fact remained that Bolshevik progress was being carried out by means of a severe policy of underconsumption, which had been depressing living standards continuously since the introduction of the "General Line," that is, the policy of forced collectivization and industrialization, and it rested on the absurd premise that a peasantry numbering one hundred million people could be quickly destroyed.

The shrill tone of Abramovitch's critique was dictated by Bauer's further conclusions and their implications for Russian social democracy. In his *Kampf* article, Bauer had urged the Mensheviks to accept the Bolshevik dictatorship not only as a historical necessity but as a factor actually favoring socialism. Menshevik demands for democratization should be moderated or even suspended until some future moment when democratization could be introduced as the final stage in the process of transformation already undertaken by the Bolshevik regime.

In Abramovitch's view, Bauer's recommendations rested on a faulty analysis of the nature of the Soviet regime and on fallacious reasoning. For the Mensheviks the Bolshevik dictatorship was a form of utopian revolution which in proletarian-socialist guise was realizing the national tasks of a bourgeois-peasant revolution. It was not a "proletarian state with bureaucratic distortions," as Lenin had claimed and as Bauer now seemed to believe. Rather, it was a bureaucratic despotism with proletarian phraseology. The war raging in the Soviet Union was not between proletarians and peasants but between the dictatorship and the masses, peasant as well as proletarian. As long as the dictatorship persisted, the unavoidable process of degeneration of revolutionary utopianism into some sort of state capitalist Bonapartism would continue.

In spite of such brave rejoinders, the Mensheviks were badly shaken by the apparent successes of Stalin's policies. In 1931, Abramovitch had put the question squarely: "What would happen if the [Bolshevik] experiment succeeds?" At that time he had answered quite categorically: "This would mean that we should burn not only the [*Sotsialisticheskii*] *Vestnik* and [party] platform, but also all the Marxist books we have [ever] studied." As evidence of Bolshevik success mounted, however, the Mensheviks proved reluctant to draw such radical conclusions immediately. Rather, they began to revise their basic views in two different directions, and out of this revision emerged two distinct factions whose separation was to be consummated some ten years later.

The first revisionist tendency, elaborated by the Menshevik left wing under Fyodor Dan, sought to salvage the earlier Menshevik analysis. After some groping and hesitation, and notwithstanding the earlier Menshevik critique

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of the notion of state capitalism, these Mensheviks now argued that the Soviet Union could perhaps be seen as having entered a necessarily transitory phase of state-capitalist development. Objectively speaking, this phase represented real progress vis-à-vis the earlier primitive forms of capitalism. Industrialization and collectivization in particular were achievements that no future democratic regime in Russia should attempt to undo. On the international level too, the transformation of Russia marked an advance for the working class inasmuch as it encouraged and strengthened the proletariat in the world-wide confrontation with capitalism and fascism. In the course of the 1930s this argument was to gather increasing weight.

Dan's arguments failed to convince even some of his close collaborators, such as Nikolaevskii and Abramovitch. The second revisionist tendency within the Menshevik camp emerged out of this disagreement with Dan but it formulated its position more slowly. Initially, some Mensheviks on the margin of the Foreign Delegation emphasized the increasing danger of counterrevolution created by the adventurism of the General Line. Others maintained that the General Line was creating an embryonic bourgeois society in Russia and that it was futile to pin one's hopes on a Russian working class corrupted by Bolshevik practices and reduced to the status of state serfs.

For Dan's Menshevik critics the idea that state capitalism could somehow be topped off with democracy to produce socialism was symptomatic of a deep misunderstanding of certain fundamental issues. Already in his polemic with Bauer, Abramovitch had asked a pointed question: If the Russian masses attained material welfare, a higher cultural level, social justice, and a powerful position vis-à-vis the outside world through a regime of "welfare absolutism" without a trace of freedom, what was the historical function of freedom and why was it necessary at all? Why should the Russian masses long for freedom and what sort of arguments could the defenders of freedom use to call for the elimination of a successful dictatorship? Dan's relegation of political democracy to some future final phase of development, like Bauer's willingness to postpone the question of freedom indefinitely, showed that Dan, Bauer, and their ilk attached insufficient importance to values which they claimed to espouse.

The objections formulated by the anti-Dan wing of the Menshevik Foreign Delegation echoed ever more strongly the long-held position of the extra-party Menshevik right wing. These Mensheviks, first in the journal *Zaria* and then in the *Zapiski Sotsialdemokrata*, both based in Paris and inspired by Alexander Potresov, insisted on the absolute primacy of democratic tasks in the Russian Revolution. As one such Menshevik, Stepan Ivanovitch (Portugeis), put it in an aphorism: "Between two socialists one of whom is for dictatorship, there is a far greater contradiction than between two democrats one of whom is for socialism." The same Menshevik even argued that it was not socialism that was his goal but the moment of freedom which socialism would make possible. Obviously, this Menshevik tendency perceived nothing positive in the Bolshevik regime from the very outset and saw no reason to change its views—quite the contrary!—because of the experience of the General Line. Consequently, the extra-party right wing continued to castigate the "Martov Line" as a half-struggle against, half-recognition of the Bolshevik regime and it persisted in judging the Soviet Union by the yardstick of freedom and democracy.

In the course of the 1930s the formerly cohesive Menshevik group around the Foreign Delegation and the *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* thus began to dissolve into two factions. The first faction, under Dan, continued to interpret Soviet developments in classical Marxist categories. It saw the Soviet Union as having passed into a phase that might be described, for want of a better term, as state capitalism under a pseudo-proletarian dictatorship. This faction was troubled by the persistence of the dictatorship. It was more troubled, however, by the prospects of a counterrevolutionary reversal of this regime. All in all, it saw the new phase of the Bolshevik regime as progress vis-à-vis the past and as a source of hope for the future. The second faction emerged more grad-

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ually out of the malaise felt by some Mensheviks in the face of the growing rift between socioeconomic achievement and political-democratic failure in Soviet Russia. This second faction found itself drawn towards the position of the extra-party right wing for whom democracy and freedom were preeminent values.

From a Marxist point of view Dan's faction was certainly correct in decrying its opponents for having put abstract values such as democracy at the center of their analysis. At the same time, Dan's opponents were justified in pointing out that one could not separate questions relating to the economic base from those relating to the political superstructure. To say that Soviet Russia was progressive as some sort of state capitalist system but regressive as a political dictatorship was an unsatisfactory solution. Either one had to overlook the terrorist dictatorship and bestow approval on the Soviet regime, as Communists and their fellow travelers did, or one had to judge the Soviet system as a whole according to the criteria of democracy and freedom. In the latter case one would find the Soviet regime irremediably blemished —but also indescribable in Marxist categories. Indeed, the underlying problem for the Menshevik right lay in the fact that the Soviet regime was unclassifiable in Marxist terms and, for the moment, the Menshevik right found itself at a loss to describe the regime in alternative theoretical terms.

Fascism, Bolshevism and Totalitarianism

AS THE MENSHEVIKS WERE DEBATING these issues, momentous events were taking place in Germany which pushed even the all-important Russian Question into the background. With Hitler's seizure of power the Mensheviks were forced to choose a new exile, this time in Paris, where they reestablished their party center and resumed publication of *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik*. They were now joined in exile by the once proud and powerful German Social Democratic party (SPD), deeply traumatized by the defeat it had suffered. In these new circumstances the traditionally close ties between the two parties were strengthened by a common fate. The Germans turned to the Mensheviks for advice on clandestine publishing and smuggling of party literature. Mensheviks interceded on behalf of German comrades with French socialists. A number of individual Mensheviks continued to work in the ranks of the German party. Above all, the Mensheviks and the German Social Democrats were drawn together by a common reflection on the nature of the dictatorial regimes, whether Bolshevik or Fascist, now established in their homelands.

Obviously, socialist thinking on the nature of fascism predated Hitler's seizure of power. Simplifying considerably, one might say that the peculiar characteristic of the socialist view of fascism was that the socialists accepted the communist thesis according to which fascism was a direct outgrowth of capitalism, but they expressed so many reservations or qualifications that they tended to put the thesis itself into question.

Not surprisingly, the pioneers of socialist theories on fascism came from yet another exile group, the Italian socialists, who had fled abroad, mostly to Paris, as the first victims of fascism. In explaining Mussolini's successes these Italian exiles pointed to Italy's backwardness as a factor contributing to the triumph of fascism. Fascism was seen as specifically grounded in peculiar Italian conditions, and thus as inapplicable to Germany (although perhaps relevant to Russia?). At the same time, the Italian socialists emphasized the multiplicity and heterogeneity of the social groups supporting fascism. According to these Italian socialists, fascism expressed simultaneously the clearly conscious reaction of the great bourgeoisie, the revolt of a resentful petty bourgeoisie, and the violent revolution of a déclassé soldiery in the face of an unreal but nevertheless terrifying menace of social revolution in a backward land deeply shattered by the World War. This early explanation was adopted and developed by Filippo Turati, the grand old man of Italian socialism, who also pointed to the novelty of an alliance between plutocracy and déclassé elements. Analyzing fascism in terms of a crisis of democracy and parliamentarianism, Turati underlined those elements in fascism that were incompatible with capitalism, such as its rejection of class divisions in favor of racial divisions. According to Turati, the identification of fascism and

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capitalism rested on the application of a single abstract criterion, the defense of private property. In fact, fascism was not just an antiproletarian, capitalist dominated movement. It was an order based on the glorification of a caste system and on a permanent state of war. It represented a threat not only to the proletariat but to civilization itself.

Before 1933, German and Russian socialists observed the fascist phenomenon attentively but were at a loss in elaborating an independent theoretical interpretation. Oda Olberg, the German Social Democratic party's correspondent in Rome, wrote that fascism seemed to be a bourgeois class movement without actually being one and that fascism's victory was not a victory of the bourgeoisie although it was a defeat of the proletariat. *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* explained fascist strength in Germany in terms of the crisis of those middle strata that had formerly been the backbone of the Republic. For the most part, however, German socialists approached fascism as a political rather than a theoretical challenge. The Mensheviks tended to take refuge in the theory that "fascism [was] a superstructure for working out the economic problems of capitalism."

VIRTUALLY FROM THE VERY BEGINNING of all discussion of fascism a recurrent theme in this discussion was the comparison between fascism and bolshevism. Obviously, this comparison was vigorously rejected by both Fascists and Communists. It was advanced by certain traditionalists appalled by the mass nature of these movements and it was promoted as well by liberals for whom bolshevism and fascism were equally distant from the rule of law. This comparison acquired a popularity and momentum of its own in America, perhaps because of the prevailing liberal outlook there as well as because of the distance from which European events were observed.

Among socialists such comparisons between fascism and bolshevism were handled gingerly. To be sure, German Social Democratic activists were eager to put a sign of equivalence between their "red" and "black" opponents. Within the Menshevik circle an early *SV* article on fascism spoke of the similarity of impulses which gave rise to communism and fascism and of the common utopianism of these movements. By the early 1930s some Mensheviks of the party majority were speaking loosely of "fascism in a revolutionary disguise" in the Soviet Union. Of course, the extra-party right Mensheviks had always identified Lenin and Mussolini as identical pillars of European reaction whose regimes were born of the same mood of social revolt.

Notwithstanding such views, most socialist theoreticians were not inclined to pursue the comparison between bolshevism and fascism to its ultimate conclusion. Among the Italian émigrés, the first works to examine the two movements in a common framework saw them both as responses to certain national tasks, as different although not opposed moments of the development of capitalism into socialism. Other analyses of the late 1920s, among both German and Italian socialists, also brought out the differences rather than the similarities between bolshevism and fascism by stressing differences in goals and belief systems.

Hitler's seizure of power in 1933 gave a powerful push to the comparison between what was happening in Germany and what had happened in Russia. Both countries were now subjected to a dictatorial regime, a single-party system and an all-powerful leader. From the point of view of the socialists, in both cases the existing situation had been caused by a bourgeoisie that had defaulted in its historical tasks. More specifically, however, considerable responsibility lay with socialists themselves since the SPD was seen as having committed some of the same errors as the Russian Mensheviks: both parties had failed to complete their respective revolution. They had adopted an overly abstract and dogmatic attitude to Marxism and they had failed to take account of mass sentiment.

Even Hitler's seizure of power, however, could not overcome the apparently natural reluctance of socialist theoreticians to identify fascism and bolshevism, Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. When a young Menshevik, Boris Sapir, wrote an article in June 1933 distinguishing "enemies from outside the proletar-

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iat," i.e., reactionary forces, and "enemies from within the proletariat," i.e., fascism and bolshevism, he was severely taken to task both by the chief left-wing Russian socialist, Fyodor Dan, and by the principal theoretician of right-wing German socialism, Karl Kautsky. In writing of the "German catastrophe" Dan himself devoted considerable energy to refuting the leader of the extra-party right-wing Mensheviks, Alexander Potresov, who had recently equated fascism with bolshevism. Potresov might well consider the Bolsheviks to be adventurists like the Hitlerites who had seized power by methods of force and deception and were wielding power in the interests of their own clique. Even if this were the case (and, according to Dan, it was not), it should be evident to Potresov that these Bolshevik adventurists were not wagering on the liquidation of revolutionary processes unleashed by the war. On the contrary, the Bolsheviks were counting on igniting these processes to the level of a world-wide conflagration. Against Potresov's position, Dan put forward the prevailing social democratic view that German fascism was capitalism's choice instrument of struggle for the self-defense of an "overripe" capitalist society.

An important factor preventing socialists from pushing comparisons between fascism and bolshevism to the point of establishing an identity between the two movements, was the absence of a common theoretical framework into which both these movements could be inserted. In the course of the 1930s such a framework began to emerge with the increasing prominence of the newly coined term, "totalitarian."

THE ORIGINS OF THE TERM "TOTALITARIAN" are to be found in Italian Fascist doctrine itself. Used by Mussolini in a speech in 1924, it was soon formalized by the Italian ideologue, Giovanni Gentile. The term appeared in English in 1928 to describe the Fascist regime and in 1929 was first used to describe both the Fascist and the Bolshevik regimes. Initially, the origins of the term as a self-interpretation of fascism limited its broader applicability. German émigrés after 1933 were divided between their reluctance to apply an Italian term of reference to Hitler's regime and thus minimize the horror of Nazism by assimilating it to a less brutal regime, and their wish to underscore the universal, i.e., not strictly German, character of the new order in their homeland. The term did have the advantage of expressing the novelty of the processes they were witnessing. "Totalitarian" thus edged its way into the political vocabulary, even among socialists.

Initially, socialists used the term "totalitarian" in what might be called a relatively unself-conscious way. The term itself referred to the "total" nature of state power. As such it could be applied without any profound theoretical implications both to Russia and to Germany. Boris Sapir, in the *SV* article of 1933 already mentioned, spoke of the characteristics of the "total" state as "the use of force, the *étatisation* of all areas of life, the destruction of all opposition." He qualified the implied identification of Russia and Germany by concluding that the historical mission of fascism was that of strengthening capitalism on a new basis. According to Sapir, fascism was creating a new feudalism that was replacing liberal ideology but maintaining the instruments of production in the hands of the magnates of capitalism. The choice he saw at this historical moment was between fascism and workers' power. There was no third way.

By 1936 the term "totalitarian" was being used with reference to the Soviet dictatorship even by left-wing socialists widely considered uncritical of the Soviet Union, such as Fyodor Dan and Otto Bauer, as well as Leon Trotsky. Dan described the period of the "General Line" as a third phase of the Bolshevik Revolution during which the dictatorship became ever more "totalitarian." Comparing this phase to the era of Peter the Great, Dan stated that "it was precisely its [the dictatorship's] totalitarian character which allowed it to carry out the historically indispensable task of economic reconstruction on such a grand scale and at so quick a pace." About the same time, Otto Bauer was reflecting on the various forms that the dictatorship of the proletariat can take. Among others, "it can become the 'totalitarian' dictatorship of a proletarian party, the dictatorship of a coercive party state and economic apparatus." Finally, Trotsky was also

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writing about a "regime [which] had become 'totalitarian' in character several years before this word arrived from Germany."

Such use of the term "totalitarian" has given rise to the mistaken impression that by the middle of the 1930s the concept of totalitarianism was current in Marxist literature, even with respect to the Soviet Union. In fact, the term was almost always accompanied by inverted commas which, at the very least, could be interpreted as an expression of hesitation as to its appropriateness. Moreover, the term appeared invariably as an adjective rather than as a noun. One spoke of "totalitarian" state power but not of "totalitarianism," and even the adjective frequently figured as a sort of emphatic adverb, as in "totalitarian Bonapartist dictatorship." Above all, the term, especially when applied to the Soviet Union, consistently referred only to the political superstructure and not to the system as a whole. "Totalitarian" thus described the nature of the leadership or of state policies. Its application did not penetrate to the roots of the system, to that economic base which, for a Marxist, represents the defining characteristic of any social formation.

The Soviet Question

RATHER THAN ELABORATING some sort of "totalitarian model," socialist theoreticians throughout the 1930s were thus using the term "totalitarian" loosely and falling back on familiar Marxist categories for analysis. German socialists presented Germany as monopoly capitalist; the Menshevik majority spoke of Soviet Russia tending toward a form of state capitalism with political structures also tending toward Bonapartism. The increasingly tense international situation, however, rekindled earlier theoretical debates in a new form. The most urgent question for the Socialist International was whether socialists should give support to those capitalist countries that were prepared to go to war against Germany. The initial reaction of many left-wing socialists, including Fyodor Dan, was that socialists should not abet one group of capitalists against another. According to them, the only road to overthrowing the fascist regime in Germany lay in promoting European revolution. As against this position, an increasing number of socialists advocated recognition of the fact that the new alignment of forces was between democracy, even bourgeois democracy, and dictatorship. The insistence on democracy as the key criterion of judgment thus acquired even wider currency.

As long as socialists had seen the principal contradiction of the day as one between bourgeois and proletarian forces, their choice had been clear. With the growing insistence on the cleavage between democracy and dictatorship, the question of attitude and policy towards the Soviet Union became increasingly problematic. Among the Mensheviks Fyodor Dan continued to defend the traditional *parti pris* in favor of the Soviet Union. Just as the right-wing Mensheviks had maintained that there was a positive and a negative type of state capitalism, the former exemplified in Roosevelt's "New Deal" and the latter in Stalin's "General Line," so now Dan argued that dictatorship too was a variable concept. Unlike the "total" Fascist dictatorship, the Bolshevik dictatorship "remained in its nature the revolutionary utopian dictatorship of a party tied to a definite part of the working class." Moreover, Dan continued, the Menshevik party had always believed that because of the correlation of forces in Russia, slogans calling for an immediate democratic republic against the existing terrorist dictatorship would only serve as a cover for the forces of counterrevolution. The Mensheviks were fighting not only against the illusions of "integral socialism" in the Soviet Union, a concept developed by Otto Bauer, but also against the illusions of "integral democratization." The only prospects for the Soviet Union lay in gradual democratization.

the Menshevik party, Dan evolved leftward. Although Dan asserted that "the role of the dictatorship as a bearer of progress, even in its most barbarian and twisted forms, was exhausted," he criticized any unilateral denunciations of the Soviet Union or departures from Marxist orthodoxy. After *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* published extracts from the sensational revelations of an ex-Communist, Anton Ciliga, Dan took Ciliga to task for an insufficiently dialectical understanding of the Soviet Union. Ciliga saw only the existing "Stalinist

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lies" and not the "democratic-socialist truth" being born of the Revolution. While himself speaking of the "totalitarian-dictatorial regime" in Russia, Dan berated Ciliga for failing to see the positive role of the Soviet Union in the international arena and for writing as if the true place of the Soviet Union were alongside Germany, Italy, and Japan. Ciliga was also wrong in seeing a new type of social system, neither capitalist nor socialist, emerging in the Soviet Union. Although Dan had used the term "state capitalism" frequently, he now rejected Ciliga's use of the term. Ciliga did not realize that state capitalism, like fascism on the ideological level, was only a transitional form. If the dictatorship of the bureaucracy maintained itself indefinitely, the result would be not the creation of some "third system" but the outright restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union. For the moment, the very contradictory nature of developments in the Soviet Union was itself proof that the Revolution was not yet completed.

In the second half of the 1930s the Menshevik synthesis originally based on the "Martov Line" and on later attempts to interpret the Soviet Union in Marxist terms began to unravel. Dan's former allies within the Foreign Delegation such as Nikolaevskii and Abramovitch moved towards the Menshevik right wing. If Stalin's Constitution once again raised hopes of a positive evolution of the Soviet regime, the purges of the late 1930s destroyed these hopes. By the end of the decade the traditional Menshevik understanding of the Soviet Union no longer commanded a consensus, although no theoretically coherent alternative interpretation had yet emerged.

In these circumstances the announcement of the Hitler-Stalin pact in August 1939 represented a veritable bombshell. As one Menshevik put it, for some Mensheviks life did not seem worth living after hearing the news. Within a few weeks (during which Germany and Russia invaded Poland) the Menshevik Foreign Delegation put out a unanimous resolution couched in the strongest terms: "Stalinist despotism has torn from itself the revolutionary garb in which it long paraded.... It represents the domination of a national-imperialist clique which has fallen to the level of Hitlerism." Dan himself wrote that Stalin incarnated the Bonapartist-Nazi tendencies long carried by the autocracy. Stalin had thus "broken the last threads tying him to proletarian socialism and, whatever his further zigzags, he had shut himself off from all roads of return onto the terrain of the working class movement."

With the Soviet invasion of Finland, the revolt of the new party majority against Dan reached an unprecedented pitch. A formerly left-wing Menshevik, B.L. Dvinov, reminded Dan that ten years ago, in polemicizing against Kautsky, Dan had written that only the course of events would tell whether the Menshevik position of advocating reform rather than overthrow of the Soviet system was justified. Now Dvinov asked whether the events of August 23 (the Hitler-Stalin pact), September 17 (the Soviet invasion of Poland), and November 30 (the Soviet invasion of Finland) had not given an unambiguous historical verdict on the Menshevik wager. Dan should recognize that Thermidor had already occurred in the Soviet Union although now was not the time to speculate on when it had taken place.

But Dan would not revise his position. At the same time, he could not resist the pressure of his peers any further. In March 1940 he resigned from the chairmanship of the Foreign Delegation of the Russian Social Democratic Labor party and from the collective editorship of *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* to found a new journal, *Novyi Mir*, which became the rallying point of a small group of young socialists. The editorial position of *Novyi Mir* was clear: Stalin is one thing, the Soviet Union is another. Those who would have the West declare war against the Soviet Union are dangerously wrong. A merciless critique of Stalin's policy since August 23, 1939, is necessary but this critique can only be effective if it shows ways out of the crisis. Such a critique cannot be undertaken by those who believe that the policy of August 23 was inevitable.

Novyi Mir put out only four issues before the fall of France sent all the Mensheviks into a third exile. It is interesting to note that the

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term "totalitarian" appears frequently in its pages but invariably with respect only to the Fascist countries. *Novyi Mir*, like *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik*, spoke of the confrontation between civilization and freedom and totalitarian barbarism and force. For *Novyi Mir*, however, the Soviet Union, if not in its actual Stalinist form then in its essential nature and its potential, belonged clearly to the camp of freedom and not to the camp of totalitarianism. As for the future, *Novyi Mir* expressed the passionate conviction that the only choice before humanity lay between socialism and barbarism.

Not surprisingly, *Novyi Mir* and *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* immediately saw themselves, and were seen, as rivals. In this competition both journals sought contributions from the acknowledged leaders of international socialism to legitimize their own position. Thus, in its last issue *Novyi Mir* proudly published an article entitled "Some Illusions" by one "Austriacus," in fact the prominent Austrian socialist Oscar Pollack. Pronouncing himself strongly against defeatism or neutralism, "Austriacus" reiterated the early socialist position that the Hitlerite system was not the enemy of capitalism but capitalism's strongest support. The rest of the article was censored (by French wartime censorship) but one may well assume that it differentiated Soviet Russia from Nazi Germany and called for the Soviet Union to recover its true or natural position against fascism.

Meanwhile, the *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* group was also drawing on foreign authorities. An article entitled "Fashistskaia Italia i Sovietskaia Rossiia" by the ex-Communist A. Rossi spoke of Mussolini's sympathy for Communists (even though "he marches under an anti-Bolshevik banner") and stressed the affinities between the regimes. Rossi concluded by stating that "we must unveil the most dangerous illusion according to which National Socialist, Fascist, and Stalinist regimes have some 'socialist' traits which in fact they never did." In a final paragraph, where the term "totalitarian" appears five times, Rossi added: "it is essential to define socialism in its principal opposition to totalitarianism as a doctrine which can have nothing in common with totalitarian statism and which can only be brought alive by way of an ideological straightening-out of the working class."

STILL SEARCHING FOR FOREIGN SUPPORT, *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* now turned to an even more authoritative spokesman. In a private letter to a party comrade, Nikolaevskii complained that "we do not know anything at all about American [socialist] literature, which brings us into the orbit of polemics about state capitalism." He added that, "Abramovitch wants to find support [for our position] in the authority of an Austrian. . . . For example, Hilf[erding] would be glad to write in our journal and the theme begs itself: a theoretical piece about state capitalism in connection with contemporary debates about fascio-Bolshevism." Shortly there appeared an article by Hilferding, "State Capitalism or Totalitarian State Economy?"

Hilferding's Theory

AT THE TIME HE WROTE HIS ARTICLE for *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik*, Rudolf Hilferding, a naturalized German citizen, was the outstanding Marxist theorist alive. Before 1914 Hilferding had been a founder of the Austro-Marxist School and its principal economist. After having been a leader of the radical USPD, or "Independent" German socialists, during World War I, Hilferding in 1922 was instrumental in effecting a reunification of a rump of the USPD with the SPD. Under the Weimar Republic Hilferding remained a towering figure in German social democracy. He twice held the post of minister of finance (1923 and 1928–29), edited the main organ of socialist theory, *Die Gesellschaft*, and participated in the elaboration of all party programs. In exile from 1933 on, first in Zurich and then in Paris, Hilferding continued to serve his party and to contribute (under the pseudonym Richard Kern) to its publications. Although his writings in the later part of his life were, for the most part, occasional pieces, his prestige as a thinker remained undiminished.

Above all, Hilferding was acclaimed as the author of *Finance Capital*. Published in 1910, the purpose of *Finance Capital* was to bring

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Marx's *Capital* up to date by describing the existing new trends in capitalist economy. Above all, Hilferding saw a tendency towards concentration of capital leading ultimately towards a sort of universal cartel which would govern all economic processes in a planned and unified way. Later Marxist theories developed by Bukharin, Lenin, and others, which saw imperialism, the growth of state power, and the separation of ownership from management of the means of production as characteristic of late capitalism, used *Finance Capital* as their point of departure even when they took issue with many of the work's formulations and conclusions.

In 1915 Hilferding developed the concept of "organized capitalism" to describe a possible outcome of finance capitalism. Although socialism was a logical result of processes now occurring, another alternative could be envisaged. At that time, and even in the early postwar years, Hilferding still remained convinced that given a choice between socialism and "organized capitalism" the working masses would opt in favor of socialism. He continued to attack opportunistic tendencies within socialism which would have socialists adapt their strategy to existing capitalist conditions, to reform capitalism rather than to replace it.

By 1924, however, Hilferding seemed to have come around to the position that "organized capitalism" could itself represent a transitional stage towards socialism. This reorientation in Hilferding's thinking can be seen either as a realistic assessment of a new situation or as a capitulation to reformism. Postwar capitalism appeared to have entered a new period of stabilization. The German working class had proven unwilling or incapable of carrying the Revolution of 1918–19 through to a socialist conclusion. On the other hand, "organized capitalism" was itself giving up the principle of free competition in favor of the socialist principle of planned production. Moreover, the Weimar Republic was providing a political framework through which the working class could ever more emphatically assert control over the economy. The task of this generation, according to Hilferding, was to bring the economy under the aegis of the democratic state through conscious social regulation. In this perspective, political democracy emerged as the road to socialism.

Given such an outlook one can understand why the "German Catastrophe" traumatized Hilferding even more profoundly than many of his party comrades. Hilferding now turned his attention to "the 'total state' as fascists and national socialists call their dictatorship." This total state was characterized by the absolutization and the vast extension of state power. It destroyed not only all political institutions and organizations, as had earlier absolutist systems, but also all economic and cultural associations, which became coercive organizations and immediate components of state power. The nation was depoliticized and atomized into an unconnected mass of subjects subordinated to the state. The citizen was transformed into a slave of the state. The only struggle against such a total state could be total revolution.

The focus on the "total" state affected Hilferding's view of the state in general. As the title of one of his articles put it, "total state" meant "total bankruptcy" and the notion of the democratic state as a lever by which the working class could promote its demands gave way to a consciousness of the state as an instrument of nihilism. In preparing the final version of the SPD's Prague Manifesto in 1934, Hilferding changed the positive term *Verstaatlichung* found in the earlier drafts to *Vergesellschaftung*. Although he had used the latter term earlier, it now reflected a new wariness in regard to the state, not only to the fascist state. In writing about experiments in "organized capitalism," such as those being undertaken in New Deal America, Hilferding now expressed a highly critical attitude instead of seeing these experiments, as he might have seen them a few years previously, in terms of promising steps towards a socialist transformation.

At the same time, however, there were two elements in Hilferding's new outlook that provided an element of continuity with his earlier views. First, notwithstanding his disillusionment with the evolution of capitalism in the West, Hilferding adopted what was known in

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the SPD as a "Western orientation." This implied that the natural allies of the German socialists in their struggle against Hitler were to be found in the socialist parties of the Western countries and even in nonsocialist Western forces opposed to Hitler, rather than in an alliance with the Soviet Union and the Communist movement. In fact, Hilferding went much further in this line of reasoning than many of his party comrades were prepared to go, at least initially. From 1933 on, Hilferding lobbied the Labor and Socialist International in favor of a policy of Western rearmament and military opposition to the Hitler regime. This contrasted with still-existing trends in the Socialist International in favor of "equal rights for Germany" and even with the official international socialist position, which consisted of calls for general disarmament and a strategy of general strike in case of war.

The second element of continuity in Hilferding's views appeared in his position within the ongoing debate concerning "freedom" versus "socialism," a debate which we have traced among the Mensheviks as well, and a debate in which Hilferding eventually was to come out in favor of the primacy of freedom. Whereas in the programmatic article already cited Hilferding avoided a clear-cut choice between these values by leaving it up to the "dynamic" of historical processes and specific conditions to determine their relative importance, by the following year Hilferding was insisting that one cannot suspend the goal of freedom in order to realize the means, i.e., socialism. Indeed, by formulating the issue in these terms Hilferding was suggesting that a basic dividing line lay not only between socialist and nonsocialist regimes but between those states that valued freedom and those that did not.

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the "German Catastrophe" moved Hilferding to undertake a long-term reassessment of Marxism itself. Hilferding's intimates recount that he had long resisted all urgings to revise his *Finance Capital*, claiming that conditions were not yet ripe. After 1933 such revision became both more imperative and more difficult. The metamorphosis of "organized capitalism" into the "total state" made the hypothetical possibility of a negative evolution evoked by Hilferding twenty years earlier into a tragic reality. This evolution undermined the postulates of Marxism not merely because Marx had not foreseen such an evolution but, more fundamentally, because such an evolution put into question the Marxist understanding of historical necessity itself.

In correspondence with Kautsky and in exchanges with friends, Hilferding continued ever more strongly to express doubts about the course of historical development and to voice his disappointment at the failure of the Marxist historical subject, the proletariat, to accomplish the task of liberation to which it had been called. In the last months of his life, in late 1940, Hilferding was to write a posthumously published article where he affirmed that blind force was the decisive factor in history. The very "blindness" of this process imposed limits on the possibility of knowing the laws of history so that "we cannot speak of 'necessity' in Marx's sense but only of 'chance' in Max Weber's sense." In this article, Hilferding traced the process of ever-growing power of the state and the state's increasing domination over society and economy. However, Hilferding's first, and indeed only, concrete analysis of this process in relation to Marxist theory is to be found in the article he had published earlier in 1940 in the *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* on the Soviet Union as a totalitarian state economy.

Russian Connections

THE FACT THAT HILFERDING SHOULD MAKE AN important theoretical statement concerning the Soviet Union itself requires explanation. Unlike Otto Bauer, Hilferding was not an expert on the Soviet Union, familiar with the Russian language, or possessed of firsthand knowledge of Soviet Russia. Unlike Karl Kautsky, Hilferding did not have the sort of long-standing interest in the Russian Question that had led Kautsky to make frequent pronouncements on Russian matters. To be sure, Hilferding's career too had been affected by Russian events. At the historic Halle Congress of the USPD in 1920 Hilferding had shared the stage with Martov as they both debated against Zinoviev in an attempt to stem socialist defections into the Communist camp. Then as later, however,

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although Hilferding occasionally expressed his distaste for Soviet bolshevism, his direct comments on Soviet Russia were rare, and even his attitude to Communists was pragmatic rather than theoretically founded. In the exile period, as his party comrades discussed the merits of a common front with the Communists, Hilferding expressed impatience that disagreement over the future order in Germany should take precedence over the immediate need for joint action. Moreover, right up to 1939, when writing about the "total" state Hilferding avoided using the Soviet Union as an example of the phenomenon he was describing.

AT THE SAME TIME, in the circumstances of the period Hilferding could not remain any more indifferent than other socialists to the course of events in the Soviet Union and to their theoretical implications for the Marxist idea. Hilferding thus relied on a small group of intimate associates to satisfy his need for information, to keep abreast of the theoretical debates concerning Russia, and to test his own views on contemporary trends against the lessons to be drawn from the Russian experience. As it happens, the four individuals on whom he relied most heavily were all active Mensheviks: Iurii Denicke (pseudonym: Georg Decker), Alexander Schifrin (pseudonym: Max Werner), Grigorii Bienstock, and Boris Nikolaevskii.

A participant in one of the Socialist International's congresses in the 1920s recalls that when Hilferding entered the Congress Hall with Denicke and Schifrin some delegates commented, with a wry reference to Hilferding's journal: "Das ist die Gesellschaft." One wonders how many of these delegates realized that Hilferding's right-hand man on *Die Gesellschaft*, Denicke, and its brilliant young contributor, Schifrin, were Russians, as was another contributor and prominent member of the Berlin SPD organization, G.O. Bienstock. The fact that there were close relations between Russian and German socialists and that the SPD willingly helped the exiled Mensheviks was well known. *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* was first published on the presses of the SPD's *Vorwärts*. Rumor had it that when the SPD was in a position to do so it used the German diplomatic pouch to transmit correspondence and copies of the *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* from Berlin to Russia. The Menshevik party organization may also have received a subsidy from the SPD, through indirect channels, and several Mensheviks were employed at SPD or trade union headquarters. However, the extent to which Russian socialists like Denicke, Schifrin, and Bienstock could be completely integrated into the German party does not seem to be sufficiently appreciated. Indeed, German scholarly literature on the period barely seems aware of the Russian ties of these individuals. Moreover, the prominence of these three Russians in the German party increased after 1933, perhaps because they proved less disoriented by the experience of exile, a second exile for them, than were the Germans.

When the SPD was driven into exile in 1933, Denicke was among the first in the German socialist milieu to initiate a fundamental rethinking of German socialist strategy and doctrine. Seeing the defeat of the SPD as analogous to the defeat of Russian social democracy in 1917, Denicke was among those who identified the mistake of German socialists as that of having failed to complete the Revolution at the opportune moment (1918–1919 in the case of Germany; February to October 1917 in the case of Russia). Moreover, at the crucial moment of confrontation with their enemies, Fascist or Bolshevik, both socialist parties had failed to muster the political will necessary to prevail. This lack of will, combined with a disregard of spontaneous mass forces, of those "shattered [social] elements" that carried Lenin and Hitler to power, had sealed the fate of both Russian and German social democracy. In Denicke's view, however, underlying these mistakes was a faulty theoretical stance. For far too long, German (and Russian) Marxists had been too abstract, too mechanistic and too smug in their conception of Marxism. Even at the present time, i.e., in 1933–34, as some German socialists were trying to make a "new beginning" by seeking out "true Marxism," they were in danger of repeating the same errors. Instead of concentrating on class analysis and constructing their image of man out of their analyses of classes, Marxists should work in the opposite direction and put the analysis of man into the foreground. According to

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Denicke, instead of emphasizing material and economic conditions they should concentrate on the "un-Marxist question" of the spiritual values that make up reality.

As a member of the Menshevik Foreign Delegation, Nikolaevskii was privy to all party debates, and among the German socialists with whom Nikolaevskii was in closest contact after 1933 stood Rudolf Hilferding. This is confirmed not only by Nikolaevskii's own reminiscences but also by the files of the Paris police. During a period in 1936 when Nikolaevskii was under police surveillance Hilferding proved to be the most frequent visitor to Nikolaevskii's lodgings. When Hilferding moved from Zurich to Paris in 1938 these relations intensified. For a long time Nikolaevskii seemed more interested in his scholarly pursuits than in politicking, contenting himself with following Dan and the "Martov Line." However, the tragic fate of the Russian peasantry in the process of collectivization galvanized Nikolaevskii into reconsidering his political stance. Just as Nikolaevskii's encounter with the cruelty of the White armies towards the peasantry in the course of the Civil War had moved him "leftward," so now the brutality of Stalin's war against the peasantry pushed Nikolaevskii in the opposite direction. Nikolaevskii denounced what he saw as a strong vein of "peasantophobia" among the Mensheviks in general and in Dan particularly, a phobia which Nikolaevskii was not afraid to link to Marxism itself. Nikolaevskii thus found it intolerable that anyone should find positive aspects to the crime being perpetrated against the peasants. Soon, Nikolaevskii's criticism had evolved into a general condemnation of the Martov Line's indulgence in regard to the Soviet regime. By the end of the 1930s Nikolaevskii could find no positive quality in the Bolshevik order, and the terms used to describe this order—state capitalist, Bonapartist, Thermidorian, even Fascist—failed to satisfy him. It was in these circumstances that Nikolaevskii turned to Hilferding for an attempt at a theoretical analysis of the new social formation emerging in the Soviet Union.

Hilferding's article "State Capitalism or Totalitarian State Economy?" opened with a lament on the sorry state of contemporary Marxism. This lament was prompted by an article that had originally appeared in English in December 1939 and had been summarized in the previous issue of *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik*. In this article R.L. Worrall had argued that the Soviet Union was a capitalist rather than a proletarian state. Even though private property of the means of production had been abolished, the process of capital accumulation was proceeding apace. The Stalinist bureaucracy may not resemble a capitalist bureaucracy in structure but it was similar in function. In short, the Soviet Union represented capitalism in a state capitalist form. At the same time, Worrall affirmed that even though there had been a violent counterrevolution in Russia since Lenin's death, the Russian version of state capitalism constituted a transitional stage to socialism.

For Hilferding the proponents of such views were nothing but Marxist "scholastics." They failed to acknowledge the fact that social and historical processes were frequently self-contradictory, containing both progressive and regressive potential. In trying to fit a new and original phenomenon such as the Soviet Union into the neat and mutually exclusive categories of "capitalist" or "proletarian," these scholastics were deforming the very categories they were using. In Russia both the bourgeois state apparatus and the capitalist economy had been destroyed. How could one possibly describe the outcome of this double process of destruction as a form of state capitalism?

Even independently of Russian conditions, "the concept of 'state capitalism' can hardly pass the test of economic analysis." According to Hilferding, a capitalist economy is governed by the autonomous laws of the market. Indeed, it is the autonomy of the market rather than the existence of private property that constitutes the specificity of capitalism. A capitalist economy is a producers' economy, whereas a state-run economy is a consumers' economy. In a state-run economy, prices and wages continue to exist but instead of determining what is produced they become the state's means of distributing the production of society. There is no "profit" in such an economy because profit

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means the individual appropriation of surplus products. Nor is the process of accumulation similar in a state-run economy and in a capitalist economy. Capitalists accumulate value derived from ever-expanding, profit-oriented economic activity. State functionaries in a state-run economy accumulate consumers' goods, "products that the central power wants in order to satisfy consumers' need." As Hilferding put it, "[T]he mere fact that the Russian state economy accumulates does not make it a capitalist economy, for it is not capital that is being accumulated." Moreover, could anyone really believe that a socialist economy would be able to do without accumulation?

As accumulation does not prove the existence of a capitalist economy, the fact that management of the economy is entrusted to bureaucrats does not make the bureaucracy into a capitalist ruling class. The bureaucracy is not a unified group, its material benefits do not constitute an important portion of the social product, and it does not possess any independent basis of power. The apparent omnipotence of the bureaucracy only camouflages the real situation: rule by a few individuals who seized state power, eliminated democracy and transformed the state apparatus to their own ends. These individuals—Lenin, Trotsky, and later Stalin—created the "first *totalitarian state*—even before the name was invented."

The overriding historical significance of the process undergone by Soviet Russia (and experienced also in the countries where fascism and national socialism had taken power) was that the economy had lost the primacy it had enjoyed in bourgeois society. As the totalitarian state realized its essential nature by subjecting the economy to its own aims, the economy was stripped of its own laws. Whether in Germany, Italy, or Russia, economic laws were replaced by subjective and irrational factors in decision-making. Instead of economics ruling politics, politics governed economics, and politics acquired such autonomy that the totalitarian state could only be compared, if to anything at all, to the Praetorian regime of the late Roman empire.

Hilferding did not shy away from drawing out the implications for Marxist theory of this historical development. He criticized the "Marxist sectarian" who, "like the faithful [believing] only in heaven or hell," sees only capitalism or socialism, bourgeoisie and proletariat. At the same time, Hilferding admitted that "we," i.e., Marxists and democratic socialists, had never imagined that "the political form of that 'managed economy' which was to replace capitalist production for a free market could be unrestricted absolutism." Even if the emergence of the totalitarian state could be attributed to exceptional circumstances, this development warranted a rethinking of the correlation between economics and politics assumed by classical Marxism. As for the specific question that had prompted his piece, Hilferding concluded his article:

> . . . the controversy as to whether the economic system of the Soviet Union is "capitalist" or "socialist" seems to me rather pointless. It is neither. It represents a *totalitarian state* economy, i.e. a system to which the economies of Germany and Italy are drawing closer and closer.

The *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* published Hilferding's article with an editorial note stating that the *Vestnik* would return to the questions raised here in a later issue. However, historical events intervened. Within several weeks of the article's publication, Paris had fallen to the Germans, and Hilferding and the Mensheviks had joined the flood of refugees flowing into the unoccupied part of France. Over the next few months, thanks to the intervention of the AFL-CIO, some of these refugees, including most of the Mensheviks, set sail for America. However, in spite of the vigorous urging of Nikolaevskii and other friends, Hilferding chose to wait for a strictly legal (and unobtainable) French exit visa and remained in France, whether out of lassitude, fatalism, or a false sense of security. He spent the last months of his life doing research on ancient civilizations in the municipal library of Arles and writing "Das historische Problem." Hilferding was arrested by the Gestapo early in 1941 and taken to prison in Paris where he disappeared.

In the following years, the Mensheviks, now

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publishing *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* in their third exile, New York, returned to the theme of Hilferding's article. Nikolaevskii wrote several pieces on Hilferding himself, and the *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* reprinted Hilferding's article in 1946, although without the opening lament on the fate of Marxism and without some of Hilferding's introductory comments. In 1947, this version of the article appeared in English in the *Modern Review*, an ambitious journal that sought to revive socialist theory in the aftermath of the World War. The editors of *Modern Review* were Travers Clement and Lewis Coser, as well as Hilferding's closest Menshevik associate, Georg Denicke. The "moving spirit" behind the *Modern Review* was none other than Rafael Abramovitch. In the same year, Hilferding's article was also published in French in the *Revue socialiste* with an extended commentary by Boris Nikolaevskii.

In the course of the 1950s, the surviving Mensheviks made the theory of totalitarianism the linchpin of their interpretation of the Soviet Union, even reading the germs of totalitarianism back into the events of the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party in 1903 out of which bolshevism and menshevism had emerged. In the conditions of the 1950s, however, the circumstances which had given rise to the theory of totalitarianism and to the debates concerning this theory no longer existed. On the one hand democratic socialists were no longer agonizing over the attitude to adopt towards the Soviet Union. On the other hand the theory of totalitarianism was now dominant in academic circles, even within the American foreign-policy establishment, and it no longer needed the authority of Hilferding to justify itself.

Nevertheless, the argument developed by Hilferding has not lost its relevance over the years. In the 1940s, anti-Stalinist dissidents from official Trotskyism developed a theory of "bureaucratic collectivism" which, whether by coincidence or by inspiration, echoed Hilferding's reasoning. In 1979, the American journal *Telos* published an article by a member of the German New Left describing the Soviet Union as a "totalitarian state capitalist" regime and regretting the fact that the left had neglected the theory of totalitarianism because of the theory's Cold War connotations. Clearly, at least part of the New Left remains unaware of Hilferding's argument concerning the relation between totalitarianism and capitalism or of the Menshevik debates underlying Hilferding's insights. □

This essay is based primarily on the periodical press of the Russian and German social democratic emigration and on archival sources located at the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, and at the Hoover Institution, Stanford. An enlarged and annotated version of this essay is to be published as a Kennan Institute Occasional Paper, available from the Woodrow Wilson Center, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

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Oliver Conant

Culture and the Neoconservatives

"But in the world of ideas, no individual, no small group, is ever good enough or wise enough to deserve such licence."
—T. S. Eliot, the *New Criterion*, 1926

It is a characteristic of ideological groups—on the right as well as on the left—that they feel justified in taking "positions" on everything. In this as in other respects, the neoconservative intellectuals follow in the footsteps of an earlier generation of Marxists. They proclaim not only about politics, but also about morality and culture.

In the field of culture the neoconservatives have on occasion posed as beleaguered defenders of the idea of the canon, that is, of an order of works of art and literature traditionally accepted as great. Here they have been greatly aided by segments of the academic left. The more unthinking followers of Derrida, of deconstructionism, of various forms of debased and sectarian Marxism and feminism, regard the idea of the canon as an oppression and seek its overthrow in the name of various critical absolutisms. The neoconservative polemicist needs no more excuse than this misguided vehemence for treating 1986 as if it were 1968.

In practice, the neoconservative claim to be "for the canon" doesn't amount to much more than the old reviewer's trick of making flattening comparisons of contemporary writers of whom they disapprove with Tolstoy or some other tremendous name. Neoconservatives disapprove of many, many contemporary writers. Towards these writers they love to adopt the sniffy, "This will never do" approach of Francis Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh Review*—the Jeffrey who is notorious in literary history for having said this of the poems of William Wordsworth.

When it comes to the modernist canon, few neoconservatives show much interest in acting the part of defender—that role has been taken up among them so far mainly by the art critic Hilton Kramer. Most of them seem far more inclined to attack than to uphold canonical works of modernism, and modernism in general. Edward Banfield's 1984 book *The Democratic Muse* places modern art under suspicion for its latent or actual "nihilism" and sighs after the days of honest craftsmanship. Kenneth S. Lynn, when he's not zealously trying Malcolm Cowley again and again for his past as a fellow-traveler, busies himself discrediting any American literature, starting with Emerson, that has a strongly adversarial character. Lynn accuses Emerson of being a hypocrite for supporting himself on the lecture circuit, Whitman for covering up his true sexual nature and for being an "intellectual's poet," whatever that means, and Hemingway for living by a "sham" code of honesty. At least in his polemical pieces Lynn is clearly some kind of professional crank—they so often amount to little more than the ferreting out of what he regards as shameful little secrets behind everyone's accomplishment.

And what of Norman Podhoretz, not these days best known for his literary criticism? When he was young Podhoretz won a fellowship to Cambridge, where he studied under the great English critic F. R. Leavis. In a 1982 essay on Leavis, Podhoretz argues oddly but revealingly that Leavis's dogmatism, which most people would agree was his major failing, was "on the contrary . . . one of his most valuable qualities and the essential ground of his greatness as a critic." Podhoretz dissents from Leavis's high valuation of D. H. Lawrence, however. About the characters in Lawrence's beautiful *The Rainbow* Podhoretz writes that "there is no life in them because they are counters in the polemical play of his [Lawrence's] ideas." Podhoretz has himself clearly lived so long in the unremitting glare of the polemical play of ideas that all his dazzled eyes can see anymore is polemics, even in how Tom Brangwen married a Polish lady, or in the girlhood of Anna Brangwen, or in Ursula Brangwen's first love.

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Podhoretz's dismissal of Lawrence occurs in an essay on Leavis included in his most recent collection, *The Bloody Crossroads*. It was originally published in Hilton Kramer's the *New Criterion*, as was Podhoretz's essay belaboring Henry Adams for his anti-Americanism. Given that both Adams and Lawrence are recognized by literary historians to have had some part in defining—and defying—modernity, does this suggest a certain selectivity in Kramer's notions of what constitutes the modernist canon? No doubt; but to me it mainly suggests how in the little world of the neoconservatives, given over as it so often is to mutual admiration and promotion, someone like Podhoretz can always expect his friends to make generous allowance for his utterances, no matter how crude.

Joseph Epstein, who has of late enjoyed considerable prominence in this little world, is another example of ill will toward the modernist enterprise. (Epstein was at one time to be found in these pages attacking the neoconservatives as "intellectuals in retreat," a retreat which he has since joined, contributing regularly to *Commentary* and editing the now solidly neoconservative *American Scholar*.) For some years he seems to have dedicated himself to the search for "positive" authors, like the now little-known James Gould Cozzens, conformable to his own confessedly middle-brow tastes. "Positive," that is, by comparison with so suspect a character as Hemingway, or other modern portraitists of American despair (Dreiser, Dos Passos, Fitzgerald). The way Epstein goes about exhuming Cozzens is instructive. He accepts most of the strictures of Dwight Macdonald's famous attack on Cozzens, "By Cozzens Possessed," which appeared in the January 1958 *Commentary*, in those years a rather different kind of anticommunist publication. Not only does Epstein accept the justice of Macdonald's principal charge, that Cozzens was hopelessly anti-intellectual, but I think at bottom he rather likes this in Cozzens. Indeed one suspects that it is precisely because Cozzens kept up such a "gunfire against the intellectuals" that Epstein can speak of him as "a serious literary mind, unencumbered by the clichés of the day, at work on serious matters." (I remain open to the prospects for a Cozzens revival. After all, only Cozzens's anti-Semitism has shown signs of going out of fashion in American life. His racism and misogyny are still very *au courant*, and when has a wildly inflated prose style ever been an obstacle to acceptance by the American public?)

In their apparent anxiety to fasten onto authors of unquestionable rectitude, and in their condemnations of established writers whose virtue they feel is open to question, the neoconservatives recall the polemical procedures of the vulgar Marxist criticism of the 1930s as practiced by the American followers of Stalin. The "militancy that came out as rancor" and "indiscriminate contempt" that Alfred Kazin observes in the sorrowful, angry account of this period in his book *On Native Grounds* are not absent from either the tone or the practice of neoconservative criticism.

True, Epstein is not quite indiscriminate. He has chosen to exercise his plentiful supply of rancor and contempt only on authors who if they have established reputations are still conventionally understood to be lesser figures, like Virginia Woolf or E. M. Forster, and who are also, according to Epstein's generous way of thinking, vulnerable on the grounds of their sexuality. (He has called Forster a "homosexual utopian," neatly uniting two neocon anathemas.) Proust and Gide, who might also be thought to be vulnerable to an attack on sexual grounds, Epstein has so far left alone, and he has maintained silence on Joyce and Kafka—perhaps these figures are just too big for his hatchet. The dauntless Irving Kristol, it is only fair to report, has recently (in his contribution to the fiftieth-anniversary issue of *Partisan Review*) proclaimed as first among the conclusions he reached upon his conversion to neoconservatism the considered judgment that "Jane Austen is a greater novelist than Proust or Joyce." It is perhaps worth remembering that it was in part her quiet scorn for spiritual vulgarity in all its guises that made Austen a great novelist.

In the course of his *Commentary* essay on E. M. Forster it becomes apparent that Epstein believes the most interesting or significant fact about a homosexual artist is necessarily that artist's homosexuality (long a tiresome article of faith among some enthusiasts of gay liberation). "It is no longer possible to think of Forster as a writer who happens to be a homosexual," Epstein announces. Reporting that the novelist's "social life was almost entirely homosexual," and squeamishly observing that his letters to an Arab lover, Mohammed el Adl, are "gushing," Epstein concludes direly that Forster "must be considered a writer for whom homosexuality was the central, the dominant fact in his life." As it turns out, all this fag bashing is not entirely gratuitous. It is in the service of a larger point that Epstein is anxious to make about Forster: He "hated middle-class life." This is key. It explains the extraordinary animus, the hatred that is to be found, not in Forster's art, which is too

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English to hate the bourgeoisie with the hatred of a Flaubert or a Rimbaud, but in the outraged breast of the author of this essay.

Podhoretz writes as an out-and-out ideologue who has long relinquished any ambition he once had to communicate to others by means of a developed and subtle style. By contrast, Joseph Epstein takes enormous pride in sounding like somebody's idea—his?—of how clubby, familiar essayists of the literary past are supposed to sound. Epstein's trouble is that, apart from the making of assaults on established reputations, the attempted resuscitation of exploded ones, and the odd bit of heresy hunting (in *Commentary* he may be found arraigning writers like Robert Stone and E. L. Doctorow for their degrees of "anti-Americanness"), he has little to say.

Modern Philistines

EPSTEIN'S *BEAU IDEAL* APPEARS to be the reactionary English man of letters, like G. K. Chesterton, whose always pointed, lapidary paradoxes, however, have graced his style as little as Chesterton's saving humanity has widened his outlook. Actually, the English writer Epstein bears some faint resemblance to is Charles Kingsley, the nineteenth-century apostle of "manliness." In his youth an enthusiastic social reformer, Kingsley eventually became very reactionary and wrote essays attacking Shelley and Keats for "effeminacy." His polemical manner was once memorably described by a later critic as "a way of talking . . . with the air and spirit of a man bouncing up from table with his mouth full of bread and cheese and saying that he meant to stand no blasted nonsense."

As it is used today, the term "philistine" has lost some of its opprobrious definiteness. Perhaps this is because there is no widespread agreement on what might constitute a desirable civilized norm or mean from which philistinism would represent the defect. To call a man a "philistine" in this state of affairs is to call him a name. A name good or bad, according to sensitivities. Call Epstein a philistine and he may not much care—perhaps he thinks of himself as a "fighting" philistine, or something of the sort. Call Podhoretz one and it may well awaken memories in him of the time when his career as critic and editor brought him into contact with intellectual men and women who defined themselves in large measure through their sustained opposition to philistinism, whether this was to be found in debasing forms of massified popular entertainment or in the propaganda of the Stalinist cultural-bureaucratic apparatus. But I can't imagine that by now Podhoretz would much care either.

The word "philistine" today may have an uncertain application, but if to be small in mind and heart and coarse in argument is to be philistine, then the neoconservatives would seem to deserve to be called the philistines of our day. Not in Matthew Arnold's sense—his philistines were members of a thriving, dynamic middle class who, if they did not yet fully rule their society, looked forward to the day when their hard work and ingenuity would allow them to take power. Only complacency and narrowness of conviction, the unlovely qualities which even people sympathetic to their ideas remark in the neoconservatives, link them to Arnold's philistines. Otherwise the contrast could not be more complete. On the one hand, a great historic class, with tradition and a sense of mission and great expectations. On the other, a tiny, embittered sect, with no real tradition to uphold, with no hope of real power beyond the crumbs of influence tossed to them by our cynical right-wing administration or the chance to play the jester in America's boardrooms.

Hilton Kramer's insistence on the need to mount a defense of modernism makes him, as I have indicated, something of a rarity among neoconservatives. But Kramer's view of modernism as "an essential component of bourgeois culture" won't get us very far. Historically, modernist art and literature have tended to resist—at times from highly reactionary premises—stultifying bourgeois routine and the rule of money, representing these as intolerable constraints on individual selves. If there is an art today so acquiescent as to be described as a "component" of bourgeois culture, or what's left of it, it would surely be much of what goes by the name of postmodernism. As Denis Donoghue has argued with sardonic cogency in a recent piece for the *New York Times*, "The Promiscuous Cool of Postmodernism," the refusal to conceive of the self as existing in any active or significant opposition to the world's malignancies, part of a larger refusal to cede to the idea of the self any of its former urgency, has resulted in an art which is conservative in its essential or final tendency, bereft of any impulse to challenge the late-capitalist society that gives it its freedom.

One might expect the neoconservatives to find much to relish in postmodernist attitudes. But Kramer, who has rejected much in his past, notably his own and everyone else's left-liberalism, has retained a love of the culture of high modernism which is both fiercely protective and rather routinely dismissive of later artistic effort. His magazine does cover new developments in the New York

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art world. But so long as these developments are new, as a composer friend of mine once remarked with respect to new music, they are likely to come in for attack.

AS IS TRUMPETED BY THE TITLE OF of his recent book, *The Revenge of the Philistines*, Kramer claims to be just about the last nonphilistine around. In the five years since he first began to publish his magazine, however, he has seemed desirous enough of a conspicuous place among those I have been calling the new philistines. How else to explain his giving so much space to the Bruce Bawers or Andy Starks, who write in the glib sarcastic style of *The American Spectator*? Or his intolerant, obsessive campaign against Susan Sontag? (One could wish that Sontag's radicalism, at certain crucial junctures in our recent history, had been maintained with the intelligence she brings to literary matters, but to understand her writings as tantamount to the evil designs of the Republic's enemies seems unduly alarmist.) He has also lately taken to the low tactic of red-baiting, long a favorite pastime of both old and new philistines. In the June 1985 issue of *The New Criterion* Norman Cantor called Lawrence Stone—the distinguished social historian of Princeton University—a Marxist, and repeated and defended his charge, with Kramer's editorial support, despite the evidence to the contrary supplied by Stone's shocked colleagues. Even a polite letter of protest from Gertrude Himmelfarb, herself a neoconservative luminary, failed to elicit the apology and retraction due Stone from Kramer and Cantor. The philistines are a thick-necked people.

In a judicious review-essay on *The Revenge of the Philistines* published in the *Village Voice*, Morris Dickstein has suggested that despite his political excesses Hilton Kramer has a fundamentally apolitical mind. The propensity to make headlong assaults is quite absent from his considerations of, say, his favorite canvasses of the New York School.

Kramer contemplating a Rothko is writing in a particular mode, that of the connoisseur. Connoisseurship can be an honorable and necessary mode in criticism. This is especially so when the connoisseur dares to attempt what Lionel Trilling once said was one of the hardest things to do in this world, to put yourself into "an antagonistic critical relationship to what claims to be new." But Trilling would have had little respect for Kramer's style of automatic antagonism to the new, as little patience indeed as he had for the "irritable mental gestures" passing for thought among American conservatives. And he might also have pointed out that connoisseurship, in correcting vulgar errors of taste, lapses on occasion into errors of its own, in some ways no less vulgar. One is an annoyingly proprietary way with masterpieces. (All the agony the abstract expressionists were willing to suffer for their art was not, after all, undergone for the sake of receiving the expert notice of The *New Criterion*.) Another is an overemphasis on the unparalleled importance of the cherished art work, and above all on its seriousness.

In his article Dickstein points out how oddly assorted Kramer's insistence on the serious is with the whole side of modernist expression which is comic and irreverent. And Leon Wieseltier has complained about the "talismanic" use of the terms "serious" and "seriousness" among the neoconservatives.

Serious art is serious. All great comedy is serious. It really shouldn't be necessary to keep repeating the fact, like some mantra or litany. But the words, "the seriousness of art" do seem to have rather a prayerful meaning for Kramer. He appears to mean by them something quite other than what most people would understand the phrase to mean, or imply. I think he has in mind an idea of art as a sacred place, a place of refuge. A refuge from disorder and conflict, from anything dark and primitive and lurid, from the voices shrill in argument that serve as his imagination of politics. Probably he thinks of the enjoyment afforded by this refuge as a just reward for the service he has rendered to modern art in the course of a lifetime spent defending its purity from the revilers and hucksters. But to think of art as a reward, as so much precious treasure, diminishes one's readiness to make the discriminations that need to be made, to discern what is humanly objectionable along with what remains of worth in the legacy of modernism, or any art. And to turn art into a refuge has the effect of removing it from its sources in life, of canceling its existence as argument, which all great art also is, and sometimes is primarily.

THE NEOCONSERVATIVES, like some of their adversaries on the left, are people with little patience for all those who do not share their ideology. Partly this is because they have a "born again" mentality—most are ex-leftists. They have all made their peace with American capitalism and the "American way of life," including its crass acquisitiveness and unthinking patriotism and even its intolerant religiosity. They have done so partly for political reasons—they conceive capitalism to be identical with democracy, and they further conceive the embrace of capitalism to be required by the logic of their

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anticommunism—and partly for the many excellent and obvious, if less theoretical, reasons for making a happy conciliation with the American status quo. They are well funded by the corporations. The *New Criterion*, for example, is supported by grants from the wealthy right-wingers of the Olin Foundation.

But if they are, in some sense, among "the haves" in our increasingly polarized society, what is it that they do have, really? I am not convinced that they have what they perhaps most want, genuine influence beyond the handful of intellectuals who can spare the time to pay often hostile attention to them and their magazines. The usual neoconservative tone of unrelieved scorn, and even more the idea they entertain of themselves as a sort of saving remnant, surrounded by a howling mass of the culturally damned and abandoned, must arise from a growing sense that they have so far failed in their attempts to make much of an impact upon what in a better time one could have called the educated public. If they continue to dogmatize and carry everything to extremes, they will continue to fail in this. And they will also fail to win the respect of the intelligent and sensitive young, the next generation of serious writers, artists and intellectuals, who love great books and great art, the classic works of modernism among them. □

George Packer

Seductions of the Lower Strata

Spring brings out robins, crocuses, and the homeless. On a May afternoon I was sitting on the bank of the Charles River in Boston, angling for the first tentative pleasures of sun and birds, when I noticed a large man lugging a plastic bag amid the reeds. Even before I recognized the face and the balding head of curly hair from the shelter where I'd worked all winter, his walk—heavy, meandering, head bent—labeled him homeless. I went over to greet him, and asked where he was staying now that the shelter was closed.

"Wherever I can. Most nights at the airport. They don't bother you at Eastern. But my legs, they're getting sore from being cramped up in that chair, and what with the cleaning people and the damned P.A. I can't get more than four or five hours a night."

Ray Burger, already sunburned, was spending his days taking advantage of the new welfare system that nearly everyone on the outs uses at one time or another: collecting cans and bottles for the deposit. Three years ago he'd been a mover. Now he was past forty, knew no one would be eager to employ him, and wasn't sure he could work anymore. "The lower strata," he said, "it gets seductive. Once you're out it's hard to get back in—it's easier to sink on down."

"Have you looked at the want ads?"

The smile was knowing and inert. "That would be the logical thing to do."

He said he was tired of this life, it was hard and above all boring, the hours wasted in the library or waiting for people to finish their soft drinks. "I should have looked for work when the shelter was still open. That wasn't a bad place, it took care of a lot. But I let the chance go. Now I have to spend all my energy finding dough for food and a place to sleep. Looks like I'll be out again next winter. Hell," he laughed, "by now I can do it easy."

I HAD MET RAY BURGER the winter before, at a homeless shelter in the basement of a Lutheran church where he was one of the "guests" (even after a year the first word that comes to mind is "inmates"). I went partly to be of use, and partly to learn something about the "homeless problem," to find out about the people who were in the headlines every winter as the shelters overflowed, and became public nuisances once they closed in the spring. Between seasonal attitudes of cold pity and warm revulsion, not much room was left to know anything of the people involved.

It was a "dry" shelter, about middling as far as city shelters went—not as nice as the United Way house up the road with its bedspreads and television room, no substitute at all for a furnished room or low-rent apartment, but better than the cavernous stockhouse that passed for an emergency shelter near downtown. The church donated its basement to a local university between November and April, and relentlessly cheerful college students staffed it every night.

By seven o'clock the guests were collecting at the locked back door, but they had to stamp and bob in the cold for an hour before a student came up to let them in. Even then they'd only made it to a sort of purgatory, an entryway at the top of the basement stairs. There they crowded on the steps or leaned against the wall for another hour—getting edgier

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as the door opened every few minutes amid curses to let in a blast of air and a new guest—before descending at nine p.m. to paradise, a hot meal and a mattress in the basement.

Even this was uncertain for some of them until ten. The shelter had twenty-five mattresses. Whenever the number of guests exceeded this (every night of the winter), a lottery was put in use. Once you'd spent a night, you were "presigned" and had rights to a bed for two weeks, as long as you kept the rules and arrived by ten o'clock. If you came in at three minutes past, you were out in the cold, "unpresigned." After two weeks the "presigned" had to reenter the lottery, which meant waiting the added hour till ten o'clock, when the number of "unpresigned" beds was known, and drawing numbers for them. On bad nights ten people drew for one bed. Before the lottery losers were turned out into 5-degree cold, calls were placed to other city shelters, but by ten o'clock a free bed was as rare as an affordable apartment. Once a month there was an "amnesty," when the slate was wiped clean and everyone went back into a general lottery.

A GUEST'S LIFE at the shelter revolved around these two-week and one-month cycles, lulling stretches of security broken by random chance. This rather complicated system favored the regulars, the ones who knew a bed could be secured with half a day at laundry detail and who tossed out the words "presigned" and "amnesty" as easily as spitballs. Someone wandering in off the street one night could easily conclude that the rules were designed to cheat him. So the shelter managed to reflect the society the guests had left: it set up a hierarchy of insiders and outsiders, enforced it by rules and incentives, and periodically levelled them all with sheer luck.

Frisked for drugs and knives, smelled for booze, the guest was assigned a mattress with sheet, blanket, pillow, and towel on the linoleum floor of a large room where the church choir rehearsed during the day. Men and women were partitioned by rolling blackboards that had musical scales scrawled across them. At lights-off, eleven o'clock, the open door of this room gave off an overwhelming stench. The men who didn't sleep fully clothed stood over their mattresses stripping off the usual five or six layers, and the women behind the blackboards did the same, exuding hidden odors like an old bandage unwrapped from a wound. One shower was available, but it was always blocked up, half-flooding the hall. Most guests went without. Fifteen minutes of ritual spraying with Lysol in the morning sweetened the smell but didn't disperse it.

The kitchen was off-limits to guests. Soups and stews were collected in buckets from local restaurants, and guests sat at four metal tables in the dining room and ate pasta and bread and canned vegetables off paper plates while students induced them to chat—about the state lottery, Scientology, the snow. Once every few weeks the mood at dinner, usually somber or almost manically cheerful, turned violent. Two men quarrelled over a mattress one had claimed from the night before, and fell to shoving each other. Then the cops had to be called; the thin camaraderie between students and guests fell apart, and twenty-year-olds sent adults twice their age to bed early. Over the winter at least twenty people had to be permanently "barred."

It was easy to label individual guests, but as a group they defied stereotype. Middle-aged alcoholic men, out-of-state drifters, bag-ladies, runaway teenagers, vets, young jobless blacks, ex-grad-students, ex-cons, the evicted, the laid off, a few men who woke up at four a.m. for minimum-wage day labor, a few handicapped, a few crazy. An unemployed construction worker just out of jail for drunk driving had found his apartment ransacked, leaving him nothing but the clothes on his back. A soldier back from Germany was waiting for his first army check and had dropped out of culinary school when his money ran out. A Namibian dissident had dropped out of the university and, rumor had it, was risking deportation.

Some, like him, wouldn't say a word about their circumstances. Others spun endless lies, like the lame Willie Nelson lookalike who'd fished with Hemingway at Key West, stormed Iwo Jima, taken part in the Bay of Pigs, even done a spell in Castro's jails. Others tantalized themselves with the great apartment that was about to come through, the lawsuit against a landlord that would net a million. But the obvious fact of lacking a roof made it hard to be dishonest. The alcoholics in particular came up with point-blank self-appraisals that made you flinch: "I worked for a few days, started drinking with the dough, and next thing I knew it was two weeks later and I was out in St. Paul. A little man was sitting on my brain saying, 'You've got some money—now get the water.'" A common lot threw people together who might otherwise have avoided or hated each other. An Irishman and a black played Ping-Pong for money after dinner; a half-crazy poet, son of wealthy parents, brought an exhausted bag-lady her plate. There were quarrels and insults every night, but they had more to do with shower rights than civil rights. Down here in the "lower strata" conventional prejudice seemed

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absurd. In spite of the shelter's rules and hierarchies, homelessness was an effective leveller.

A scrupulous watchdog from the U.S. Department of health and Human Services (HHS) could have pointed out how each of the guests brought his fate on him or herself. There were not many pure victims among them. A woman's welfare check was cut; she didn't limit her expenses; back rent piled up; an eviction notice was served; and suddenly she found herself on the street. Or a hard drinker lost his job as a surveyor, was finally given the boot by his wife, went in for laboring, and couldn't scrape together a deposit for a furnished room on $24 a day pay. The shelter came at the end of poverty and mistakes that entailed more mistakes, each compounded by the bad luck that haunts you when your income hovers around $10,000. The welfare woman and the surveyor didn't "choose" the shelter. In a city where over the past fifteen years rents went up six times faster than welfare allowances, and where three-quarters of those eligible for subsidized housing could find none, the shelter chose them. Life in Boston in the mid-1980s on a low income is a high-wire act—with no safety net. Most of the people who ended up in the shelter had taken one false step.

BUT IF ANYONE COULD HAVE caught the attention of the HHS bureaucrat and ended up as a White House anecdote, it was Joe Corcoran. The night I met him he looked like an Irish hiker: about sixty, with white hair and three days of whiskers, wearing oversized khakis and boots. As if he were giving the boring details of a nine-to-five job, he explained how he'd ended up here.

"I'm a bit of a dark sheep in the family. I was a hotel clerk, not going anywhere. So I took early retirement. I was paying $230 a month for a place but Social Security brings in only $300 and I just hated seeing so much of it soaked up by rent. It seemed the proper thing for me to go out onto the streets. When it's warmer I sleep by the train tracks—I've got a spot where I hide my sleeping bag and other things. Or I go to the Cape. Sometimes I spend the whole day in the public library reading James Bond novels. They're quite good, have you ever tried one? I can see you're an educated fellow."

In his slightly pained formality you could hear the voice of a desk clerk at a two-star hotel. He looked furtively at the people in the entryway and lowered his voice. "You know, some people here aren't normal. I stay clear of them. The lottery system is a good idea—makes them fend for themselves a little. Otherwise you get these people who just stay here night after night and don't want to leave. As far as shelters go this is one of the more civilized. I have a bowl of cereal in the morning—that and supper here are my only meals. You can see I talk too much."

He smiled, and launched into a story about taking the train out to Vegas to meet a friend, wandering around the gaming tables and making, then losing, money, falling asleep in hotel lobbies and being roused and told to leave. He finally got on a night train back East without ever finding the friend. It didn't bother him. Narrowing his eyes, he spoke of passing through time zones on the train and losing his sense of time and realizing it was unimportant. "You lose old patterns of thought, old worries—time, money."

Joe Corcoran reminded me of a sadhu, one of the old Hindu men who reach an age when worldly responsibility ceases and, abandoning family and possessions, roam the land as beggars, pray, and wait for death. This was the natural course of life—"the proper thing." But he hadn't completely lost his grip on the respectable world. He kept apart from the bag-ladies and dry drunks around us, and he apologized for the state of his clothes. Tugging at his baggy khakis, he murmured, "It's a comedown. But one gets used to everything."

At the shelter Joe Corcoran was eccentric. A disabled vet named Jim was nearer the center of homeless experience. He dragged his burly frame around on a pair of metal crutches. One night he lowered himself onto the top step of the entryway and began speaking, in a local working-class accent, to no one in particular. Noticing I was listening, he addressed me.

There was no small talk. He'd been in Vietnam, and in the past two years his body had been falling apart: his legs had weakened, he was losing sensation in his feet and hands. Lowering his voice, he said, "I think I may be dying. Last month I was in the V.A. The one here is the worst anywhere. They wanted me to stay three nights but after that they were gonna kick me out and I didn't want to lose my bed here. So I didn't sign nothing or take no tests. I did tell the doc I was feeling suicidal—which I was. I get three hundred a month but I'm almost through it after twenty days."

He smiled like a boy putting the best face on a fight with a bully. "But I've got a friend who might be able to get me a room cheap on Dana Street. So I could get outta here."

"Then you could go to the V.A.," I suggested. He shrugged. The government wasn't well-loved here; the thought of the room on Dana Street cheered him up more. He rambled on, oscillating

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between his body's decay and the small things that left room for hope, like the bars in the Combat Zone that let you stay until 3 a.m. during winter and gave out free Coca-Cola. Eventually he confided his real plan.

"If I can save enough from my checks till October," he said, "I'm going out to Hawaii. I'm going to lie in the sun in goddamn Hawaii."

That night Hawaii seemed a long way off. The temperature had dropped close to zero, and when a student came upstairs to call off the names of the presigned, six men and two women were left standing in the entryway. They drew for three beds. A Chicano boy, an old Irishwoman, and Ray Burger won. But the Chicano announced he had a place to stay with friends and gave his number to Jim the vet, who could hardly believe his luck. As the Chicano went out the door, the hard-luckers got a gust of the arctic air that awaited them.

At first none of the losers spoke: a stocky man in a ski cap who'd just come out of prison for burglarizing one of the university clubs, an old woman in a black wig with four plastic bags, and a Portuguese who said he was a carpenter. A young man, slight and undernourished-looking under the hood of his parka, was waiting for food but had refused to enter the lottery. Everyone would all get dinner from the basement before being turned out. The shouts and scraping chairs below sounded positively homey.

"I think it sucks," the ex-con said suddenly. "You all are cheating me. Why'd you let them in and not me?"

I tried to explain the rules but got lost in the maze. He interrupted me. "I think it's fucked up. No, I don't want your subway money. You folks treat the homeless like they're shit, just bags you can toss out. You're as bad as the other places—man, to stay in one place I gotta act like I'm drunk, another like I'm crazy, here I gotta have a diploma or something."

By now he was laughing—not naturally, but in staccato bursts. Plates came up, the old woman smilingly buttered a slice of bread, the man in the parka chewed quickly and glanced around like a hyena expecting predators to challenge him for his food. Only the Portuguese carpenter didn't eat. Staring first at the scrap of paper with its losing number, he crouched beside me to whisper a plea.

"My wife told me that's it, to go. I drink, I can't work no more. I know I can't last on these streets! I did finish carpentry, and if you can do finish you can do rough, you know? Twelve bucks an hour. No!" he cried, hitting his forehead. "Bang, bang, something isn't right here." Apologizing, he begged me to do something.

The pathetic thing was that he did not look like a bum. His thick black hair was streaked gray. His large capable hands and a handsome face gave the impression of a family man, a provider. But the baritone voice was dissolving into a tremble. A skilled craftsman, he couldn't believe what was happening to him.

On my advice he agreed to take the subway out to the airport and sleep at the Eastern terminal. He made me go over the directions three or four times, and eventually I drew a detailed map of the subway, as if he were being sent out behind enemy lines. The ex-con decided to go along. They looked each other over, opened the door, and disappeared in the frozen night.

The woman gathered her bags and followed them out, thanking me for the meal. She had not said where she was going, and didn't seem concerned. Finally the man in the parka swallowed the last of his prey and gave me a suspicious look from under the furred hood.

"I ain't staying here," he said.

"It's not a bad place."

"I don't like living like a head of cattle. I've been on the streets since 1983, I ain't afraid. Russian officers on the Mongolian border sleep outside without sleeping bags, did you know that?"

And he went out.

WHATEVER CONSPIRED WITH POVERTY to turn someone out on the streets and down into the shelter—sickness, alcohol, debt, failure, age, bad luck—was close enough to the path of normal life that anyone who saw and heard would squirm. You might suppose that the homeless are different from you and me, but the answer that came after a winter among them was, "Yes, they have less money." Most were articulate and self-conscious about their situation, but self-consciousness didn't seem to help. It didn't help them to see that their days were wasted in boredom, petty obsessions about money, food, and weather, and the idle slouching through streets that was the unmistakable sign of disgrace. For Joe Corcoran homelessness may have brought a temporary mystical release, but most found themselves turning as sour as forgotten milk. Once that began, it was harder to resist the seductions of the lower strata.

Not long after I saw him on the riverbank, Ray Burger sank under, as he might have put it in a lucid moment. There wasn't much lucidity in the man I saw leaning against a lamppost, hands in his overcoat pockets despite the heat, kicking the gutter. His face gave him away: red with sunburn and belligerent confusion, it was searching for some-

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thing in the gutter. Three months before we'd carried on an intelligent conversation about his prospects. I wanted to ask how it had happened so quickly, but my sympathy would have meant about as much as a cop telling him to move along. So I watched from a distance, until sympathy began to seem like voyeurism and I went away. □

Thomas A. Gaines

Stop Me Before I Crusade Again

Zeal, n. A certain nervous disorder afflicting the young and inexperienced. A passion that goeth before a sprawl.

—Ambrose Bierce

If zeal is the essential ingredient of the crusader, I'll never be one of the best. My primal juices flow intermittently, with long quiescent periods during which the world stumbles along without benefit of my counsel. I am, in short, a sometime crusader.

Though I prefer the state of apathy, I am capable of feeling outrage, and outrage is the requisite emotion of the crusader. When my conscience experiences guilt overload, I become a fire-eater, a dragon slayer, a veritable St. George.

I envy those who feel no need to improve society: the ambitious who want to make it, but not make it right; those whose chest cavities contain unbleeding hearts. I look longingly upon naturalists who are content to observe wildlife, not save it; anthropologists who study race, not racism.

To qualify as a crusade, a cause must have three elements: 1) A glaring injustice; 2) little hope of remedy; and 3) potential leverage—an impact broader than the immediate goal. My first youthful crusade was a model of the type.

While reading through a railroad company's annual report, I found that I was a part owner of its subsidiary, the Split Rock Lodge. This famous Pennsylvania resort hostelry was noted for its refusal to accept Jews. I resolved to redress this inequity and charged off to the annual stockholders' meeting in Philadelphia.

You haven't experienced conservative ambience until you have attended a railroad gathering. The board room is conservative—walnut paneling; the drinks are conservative—unboozed punch; the people are conservative—high collars. And this day, the stockholders were exercised over a rumor that the dividend might be passed. The last person they wanted to hear from was a young malcontent complaining about one of their profitable holdings. I strode into this caldron waving telegrams denying a room to a Mr. Bernstein (me), then reserving one for a Mr. Painter-Jones (also me). My motion to cease this discriminatory policy was met with the suggestion that I be ushered from the room.

In the ensuing discussion, the president insisted that discrimination was not practiced, and my motion was overwhelmingly defeated. It was then that I learned a fact essential to serious crusading. If you can get a perpetrator to deny malfeasance, he will stop doing it. When I later retested, I was able to make reservations for both Bernstein and Painter-Jones. The Split Rock Lodge policy had been quietly changed.

It was the first entry in my crusading resumé; but the truth is that most of my crusades didn't fly. I choose to dwell on the few that had a beginning, a middle, and an end, preferably a favorable end. There was, for instance, the Jackie Robinson caper. It all started when a local newspaper reported that houses for sale in Stamford were inaccessible to the famous ballplayer because he was black. Realtors told him, "You wouldn't be happy here."

Angered that this could happen in my own town, I went into my crusader mode. I took petitions door to door. (If you don't have doors slammed in your face, you're not involved in a genuine crusade.) I enlisted the local ministers and invoked the names of town leaders. I asked real estate people to search out a house for the Robinsons. (Of dozens contacted, only two cooperated.)

The campaign lasted for weeks with much uninformed clatter about property values. One day, I received a phone call from Mrs. Richard Simon, wife of the publisher. She had novelist Laura Hobson (*Gentlemen's Agreement*) on the extension, and these worthy ladies lit into me for not including them in my effort. (We do-gooders are ever fearful that our goals will be reached without us.) I put them to work contacting the Robinsons who, by this time discouraged, had not responded to overtures from a broker.

Mrs. Simon brought the Robinsons to Stamford, and they purchased a house where they lived for many years. Neighbors who once worried about resale values couldn't wait to invite them to dinner.

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After resting a while, I took a firm grip on my lance and was off again. This one would have repercussions all the way to the White House.

It was in the middle 1950s at the height of the McCarthy period. The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) chapter in our neighboring town of Norwalk announced a campaign to search out and bring to bay all the Communists in town. They would find them out, they said, by breaking into homes to see what books were there.

Fear in those days was almost palpable. Not a squeak of opposition was heard. Not, that is, until I gathered the sneaker set together to challenge the VFW to a debate on the Bill of Rights. It was ignored, and we went public with an ad announcing the challenge in the *Norwalk Hour*, a local daily. This is where the crusade took on a life of its own.

A story about our challenge appeared on the front page of the *New York Times*, and, within days, it was news all over the country. Ed Murrow brought his CBS television crew to cover the story. The local VFW chairman looked into the camera and, without a blink, proclaimed to forty million viewers that he could recognize a Communist by the expression on his face.

At a news conference, President Eisenhower was asked his opinion of the "Norwalk Witch-hunt." (An effort like this must gain a kicky title or it doesn't wash as a crusade.) The president, with marvelous irrelevance, referred the newsman to the libel laws.

In the face of universal opprobrium, the National Americanism Chairman of the VFW disavowed the whole thing. The Norwalk patriots then denied there had ever been a campaign and retreated in disarray. Things had gone so smoothly, it was enough to make a self-respecting knight-errant seek another line of work.

WHAT OF A CRUSADE'S THIRD ESSENTIAL ELEMENT, leverage? Did any of these campaigns have a wider impact, a long-term effect than their immediate missions? Was the railroad meeting of long ago a tiny step toward the present-day shareholders' movement to influence corporate social policy? Did the Jackie Robinson case raise some doubts that integration hurts property values? Did the Norwalk witch-hunt help a tad in the demise of McCarthyism?

One can only hope. □

Coming in *Dissent*

- "The Chimeras of 'Libertarianism'" by Stephen Newman

Carole Woods

Why Hanford?

The Hanford Nuclear Reservation is located on the banks of the Columbia River in eastern Washington State. It is surrounded by fertile land that produces wheat, wine grapes, potatoes, apples, and cherries. The ground under Hanford is basalt, a porous rock through which ground water flows in uncharted streams under high pressure. Radioactive waste from the Hanford Nuclear Reservation has already been found to have made its way through this ground water to the Columbia River and from there to the Pacific Ocean as far as California and British Columbia. Even the Department of Energy (DOE) rated the Hanford Nuclear Reservation as the least acceptable of five locations being considered as the site for the first national commercial nuclear waste dump.

IN JANUARY the N reactor, which is the only U.S. nuclear plant similar in design to the one in Chernobyl in the Soviet Union, was shut down for six months so that safety improvements could be made. Nevertheless, Hanford remains one of the three finalists for this dubious honor.

Why?

In September 1981 the DOE's Hydrology Overview Committee stated:

> There is only one solid justification for studying this site [Hanford], and it is the sociopolitical fact that *the land is a U.S. nuclear reservation. From the* hydrogeological perspective, the Columbia River Basalt Group as a whole is not well suited for a high level waste repository.

What is the significance of the fact that Hanford is already a U.S. nuclear reservation? Hanford's primary function is the production and extraction of plutonium for nuclear weapons. Indeed, the Hanford reservation was built during World War II as part of the Manhattan Project; and the plutonium in the bomb that was dropped on Nagasaki was made and extracted at Hanford. If Hanford's function is plutonium production, why would the DOE want the commercial nuclear waste dump there? Former Secretary of the DOE James B. Edwards may have told us when he said,

> We are going to be needing more plutonium for our weapons program, and the best way I can see to get that plutonium is to solve the [commercial] waste problem. Reprocess it; pull out the plutonium.

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So what if the DOE is planning to use the nuclear fuel dump as a source of plutonium for weapons? Isn't that just good planning? Well, there are at least three problems in addition to environmental considerations:

- Military reprocessing of commercial nuclear fuel is illegal under the Hart-Simpson-Mitchell Amendment to the Atomic Energy Reauthorizing Act of 1982.
- Using commercial fuel in weapons production violates the spirit of the Nuclear Weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty which was co-authored by the U.S.
- If we divert the "peaceful atom" to the bomb, any other nation with a nuclear power plant can feel justified in doing the same thing.

Is there any evidence that the DOE intends to use the commercial nuclear waste dump as a source of plutonium for bombs? Additions are now being made to the plutonium extraction facilities at Hanford that will enable them to extract plutonium from commercial nuclear fuel rods, such as those to be placed in the nuclear waste dump. These additions are: process facility modification, which enables the PUREX (Plutonium URanium EXtraction) plant to accept commercial fuel rods; and laser isotope separation, which will be able to bring plutonium extracted from commercial nuclear fuel up to weapons grade.

Under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, the DOE will gain title to the nation's waste commercial nuclear fuel in 1998, and that fuel will then be called "DOE-owned fuel." There is no U.S. law against using "DOE-owned fuel" for bomb production.

Thus, the only reasonable explanation for the DOE's selection of Hanford as the nation's first commercial nuclear waste dump is the evident intention of the DOE to subvert U.S. law and the spirit of the Nuclear Weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty and to use the "peaceful atom" for bomb production. □

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Kenneth D. Barkin

Modern Germany: a Twisted Vision

Occasionally, a book is published or a film released that leads one to realize that the old verities no longer hold. *Heimat* is such a work. A fifteen-and-one-half-hour film written and directed by Edgar Reitz for German television, *Heimat* (which may be translated as home or roots) is at one level the nostalgic journey of a middle-aged German back to the provincial Hunsrück region in which he was raised. Reitz left this pastoral area, not far from Trier, in 1951 at the age of nineteen. If this were all, one could praise Reitz for the superb artistry of his 2,000 page manuscript and the haunting quality of his eleven-part epic tracing three generations in the remote fictitious village of Schabbach. *Heimat* drew an audience in the millions when it was shown on German television recently and was deemed a great success. But *Heimat* is also a film about German history in the twentieth century and about the current malaise in West Germany, where the Green Party is providing a stiff challenge to the Social Democrats for primacy on the left and among university students.

Many observers are troubled by the pervasive romanticism that characterizes much of the Green approach to issues and *Heimat* will, if anything, intensify this concern. Ostensibly, the film is an attempt to view German history from 1919 to 1982 through the lives of two farming families, the Simons and the Wiegands. In this sense it is reminiscent of Thomas Mann's evocation, through the Buddenbrook family of Lübeck, of the changes engulfing Germany in the nineteenth century. But Reitz's model is more current. He is clearly influenced by the current generation of social historians who believe that history can only be resurrected at the local or vernacular level. National history is rejected as too abstract and too far removed from the everyday life of the common citizen. Thus, most of the action in the film takes place in Schabbach or nearby Simmern with brief interludes in Berlin and on the Eastern front during World War II.

THIS APPROACH LEADS TO GREAT CONCRETENESS. The Nazis, for instance, are not faceless uniformed marching soldiers, but Eduard, the bumbling Simon boy who is convinced that there is gold in the village stream, and Wilfried, the cruel and arrogant son of Herr Wiegand, the mayor. However, this approach also leads Reitz to slight all events that, in his view, had little impact on remote Schabbach. Thus, we hear little about: the Kapp Putsch, the inflation and beerhall putsch of 1923, the Great Depression, the mass slaughter of Jews or, for that matter, the student movement in the 1960s and the Turkish guest worker problem of recent vintage. This is interpretation with a vengeance. Indeed, Reitz set about writing the script because he was so outraged at the stereotyped portrayal of Germans in the American television series on the Holocaust. And one must admit that however disturbing its view of history, *Heimat* is, both in its range and acting, superior.

Like Günter Grass's *The Tin Drum* and Heinrich Böll's *Billiards at Half Past Eight*, *Heimat* signals a dramatic change in German thinking. Reitz is not haunted by the Nazi period nor is he particularly concerned with the issue of guilt for World War II and the Holocaust. His aim is to change radically the nature of the discourse about Germany's recent past. While it would not be fair to say the Nazi years are a mere episode in the film, they certainly are not its focal point. For the villagers the Nazi years do not constitute a sea change in their lives or much of a change at all. They gradually become prosperous in the 1930s and Eduard Simon, now Nazi mayor of the district, expresses the wish that history would stop in the year 1935. One must remember, there are no Jews, Communists, homosexuals, or Jehovah's Witnesses in Schabbach. The rhythms of village life are altered primarily by the introduction of new technology such as telephones, automobiles, and television rather than by elections or political events in distant Berlin.

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Since there is no synagogue in the village, Kristallnacht does not occur in Schabbach nor is it mentioned. A boy on a bike does come across a work camp, where a friendly guard instructs him in shooting accuracy, and in the 1920s young men in the nearby town break the windows of a Jew who is suspected of being a separatist (wanting the Rhineland to become independent of Germany). The Final Solution is mentioned casually at a village party by Wilfried Wiegand, who clearly understands what is happening, and one does see some civilian partisans shot on the Russian front. Thus, a modest attempt is made to foreshadow the atrocities of World War II. But that is all. The years from 1940-43 are skipped entirely and we do not learn about the villagers' reaction to the victories over Poland, Holland, or France. The film devotes approximately as much time to the years 1933-1945 as to the succeeding twelve years and the twelve years after that.

HEIMAT IS ABOVE ALL A FILM ABOUT COMMUNITY and scale. For Reitz, modernization is the false Messiah that lured Germany away from a vernacular world of traditional values and humane ideals. In *Heimat*, highways result in accidental deaths and ease the movement of troops. Telephones enable parents to speak to their sons at the front and modern farm technology destroys the pure Hunsrück air. War and technical inventiveness are indisputably linked together in Reitz's mind.

In many respects the heroes of *Heimat* are the eldest Simons, Mathias and Katharina, who were born in the 1870s and are constantly seen working in the fields, at the blacksmith's forge, and in the kitchen. Mathias is either ploughing with his oxen or making horseshoes on his anvil, as his father and grandfather did and as he expects his son to do. Katharina, a large, warm-hearted matriarch, allows her kitchen to become the village center where townspeople meet to discuss their problems. She is compassionate, nonjudgmental and always has some words of folk wisdom and, when needed, home remedies for illness as well. After her son Paul leaves his wife, Maria, and children without a word, she does not even pester him with questions upon his return nineteen years later. She repeatedly stands up to the Nazi Wilfried Wiegand and is not awed by his threats to report her to higher authorities.

Reitz has no Rousseauian view of rural life; there are no voluptuous milkmaids or philosophical shepherds. When Eduard tries to romanticize his family to his new wife, Lucy, from Berlin, Katharina cuts him short. Farm life is hard and one does not get rich from it. Outsiders in the 1920s are regarded with suspicion, especially those with dark complexions. The village has a dung pit and flies are a continuing nuisance. For Reitz the hard life and simple verities are rewards in and of themselves. The old Simons do not sit around asking, "Who am I?" as their young grandson Hermann will in the 1950s, nor is old Mathias concerned with his appearance or obsessed with comfort. The older Simons never own a car, nor do they have hot water or a toilet in their two-hundred-year-old house.

In contrast, Wiegand, their affluent Protestant neighbor, whose wife is rarely seen, is always the first in the village to buy the latest technology; in the 1920s a motorbike, in the 1930s a car, and after the war the latest pesticides and an electric milking machine. In the respective houses, the viewer discerns a painting of Jesus on the Simons' wall and in succession photos of Hitler, Adenauer, and Erhard on the Wiegands' wall. Somewhat pompous and very nationalistic, Wiegand proudly sees his son become an SS recruit. Subsequently, Wilfried remains in Schabbach during the war, claiming poor health as the reason for his inability to fight. He is constantly in conflict with Katharina over the treatment of French POWs working in the village fields. Wilfried abandons the local dialect for the harsh, clipped north German associated with the Nazis. He is the only one in the village who refers to Berlin as the Reichshauptstadt (imperial capital). His cowardly brutality is apparent when he coolly kills a wounded British flyer who can scarcely move. By picturing the two local Nazis as a bumbling fool and the town bully, Reitz simplifies the villagers' political choices and, in a sense, trivializes the Nazi experience. On the other hand, Wilfried's sister, Maria, marries Paul Simon, moves into the Simon household and gradually replaces the aging Katharina as Schabbach's much-loved matriarch. When Maria dies in 1982, a Catholic priest presides at the funeral.

FOR REITZ, INSOFAR AS HE SEEKS TO EXPLAIN the Nazis' coming to power, it is a result of upwardly mobile young Germans entranced with high technology and comfort. Katharina's folk wisdom causes her to warn everyone about the modern habit of buying the latest mechanical playthings on credit. When the war comes in 1939, she says Germany will now pay the bill. It is remarkable and inexplicable that Reitz ignores the successful Nazi appeal to the peasants and artisans in terms of the preservation of traditional values against the bolshevism emanating from the cities. The Nazis courted and won substantial support among farm-

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ers and shopkeepers; to ignore this is to distort history. The Nazis received their lowest vote in the cities that Reitz despises.

In 1945 the Nazis depart, old Mathias dies, and black G.I.s with bubble gum arrive in Schabbach. As one moves into the postwar period, Reitz becomes an Old Testament prophet warning his fellow Germans that they have sold their souls for a bag of fool's gold. The real gold is where Eduard Simon searched, but it is not in the stream, rather it is the stream itself, the surrounding forests and the brisk, clean air of the Hunsrück region. His indictment of postwar Germany is remorseless. We feel Reitz's blood rising as we come to 1948. Since the Nazi era is not a wastershed for Reitz, 1945 does not constitute the year zero, a new beginning.

THE AMERICAN OCCUPIERS, in what is artistically the weakest part of the film, appear as shallow, rootless, money-grubbing materialists. They lack any sense of Heimat. Paul, the Simon son who disappeared in 1927, returns briefly in 1946, now an American millionaire with a fancy car, black chauffeur and endless chocolate bars to distribute to the sounds of an army band (without baton twirlers) playing Glenn Miller's "In the Mood." Paul's cowboy hat (although he lives in Detroit) and his smiling face in a village where no one smiles, mark him as a foreigner, a convert to another religion like his New Testament namesake. His insensitivity in seeking sex with his wife, Maria, whom he abandoned nineteen years earlier, again categorizes him as contemptible. His only virtue is his willingness to finance an optical factory (smog-free) near the village to be run by his son, Anton, who has just returned from the Eastern front. Reitz is very clear about this: The Americans have money and nothing else to offer. Paul does not even stay for his mother's funeral, making lame excuses about his visa running out and the call of business.

At this point a German historian begins to get a sense of *déjà vu*. Is Reitz taking a step forward? Or is he circling back to the latter part of the nineteenth century, when German nativists were decrying industrial capitalism and the perverse Jewish influence on German life? Have the Americans replaced the Jews as the rootless cosmopolitans who threaten German innocence and probity? Is the smile engraved on Paul Simon's face a substitute for the caricature of Jewish noses that marked nineteenth-century anti-Semitic tracts? So it appears. Just as German nativists in the past rejected Britain as a model of soulless capitalism, Reitz now rejects America as a false God, conjured up by postwar liberals and socialists. The black chauffeur is a reminder of American hypocrisy. His status mocks American denazification efforts and concern about German racism. By attacking the Americans, Reitz can reject both major parties in contemporary West Germany because the Social Democrats and the Christian Democrats have been consistently pro-American.

Like his earlier nativist forebears, Reitz makes a distinction between *schaffendem* (creative) and *raffendem* (exploitative) Jewish capitalism. Anton, Paul and Maria's son, employs 180 workers from nearby villages in his optical factory. Its success in the 1950s and 1960s is based on Anton's creativity and the clean air of the region. When a team of Belgian industrialists seek to buy Anton out by threatening to have their multinational firm break his patents, Anton turns to his father for advice, only to discover that Paul has already sold his Detroit firm to IBM and lives in southern Germany. Driving to Baden Baden (no doubt because the phone would be too impersonal a means of communication), Anton is disgusted to find his overweight father in Bermuda shorts and a Hawaiian shirt. Paul advises him that it is easier to spend money than to make it. Anton returns to tell his workers that he will not sell and no one can destroy his business because it is based on *Gemeinschaft* (close primary ties). He knows all of his workers personally and if an error is made, he can track the error to the worker and correct it. That is, the scale of his firm and the local character of the work force allow for quality, which larger enterprises inevitably sacrifice in a frantic search for immediate profit. Thus, Reitz launches a minor attack on the Common Market, although Anton, when frightened by the Belgian threats, whispers, "typically American."

IN CONTRAST TO THE "CREATIVE" CAPITALISM of Anton is his brother Ernst's business of selling aluminum siding and furniture to the local farmers so they will be up to date like the city people. Ernst, whom the farmers trust because of his local dialect, generously agrees to cart away their old rustic chests and door frames as well as the old beams that he replaces. In a warehouse he has a work force tearing apart the chests to make three out of two, which can then be sold to young urban couples as authentic antiques. To ensure that the prospective buyers will not be suspicious of these altered antiques, he has a chemist create an artificial scent similar to that of old German cupboards. All Germans, he tells Anton, seek the year 1865, and he has spray cans that can make anything, even steel,

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smell like that year. In short, he is a confidence man who buys Heimat from those who have it and sells it to those who feel the loss of it.

A further parallel with earlier nativism comes with Reitz's portrait of the Americans as sexually loose. It is a parallel that corresponds to nineteenth-century allegations of excessive Jewish sensuality. Not only does Paul seek to sleep with his alienated and abandoned wife, Maria, but a trip by Paul and his brother, Eduard, to an American army base reminds Eduard of the brothel in Berlin where he met his wife before the war. At the end of the film, prostitutes have penetrated even Schabbach, where they confide to each other that farmers have become their best customers, and muse about the old days when they began with American soldiers paying in dollars. Is this very far from older portrayals of swarthy Jews seducing innocent blond German women? In a final scene a village family is shown to have adopted two Vietnamese orphans, which serves to remind us that the village has become more tolerant over time and that the Germans have to pay for the belligerence of the Americans in Asia.

As the film draws to a close in 1982, we see Hermann, the much younger half-brother of Ernst and Paul, who had left the village at nineteen (like Reitz) and is now a very successful composer in Munich, returning too late for his mother's funeral. Hermann's Porsche gets struck in traffic jams, which Reitz sees as the hallmark of the new Germany. When a drenching rain begins during the funeral, the villagers drop the coffin in the road and seek shelter; something inconceivable in an earlier Schabbach where farmers worked in the rain. We also notice that the old World War I monument to the dead has been removed from the village center to ease traffic flow. The funeral of Maria leads all three brothers, Anton, Ernst, and Hermann, to recognize how important family and community are to them; Hermann, now convinced that the village sounds are the source of his musical inspiration, moves his recording team to Schabbach, while Ernst decides to marry a local girl. The three brothers are reconciled when they wander through their old house, searching for links with their past.

SINCE 1949 WEST GERMANY HAS ENJOYED an uninterrupted period of peace, prosperity, and democracy that has no parallel in the German past. With *Heimat*, Reitz has emerged as a devastating critic of all of Germany's presumed postwar successes; a Solzhenitsyn calling his compatriots home to their traditions and away from the ignoble West. It is disturbing that Reitz appears to be following the path of Rudolf Bahro, once a leading East German Marxist thinker, who upon coming to West Germany in 1979 joined the Greens and began to revive the tradition of *Kulturpessimismus* with his Spenglerian jeremiads about the West having gone off the right track in the Renaissance. For Reitz the wrong turn clearly came with the Reformation and the end of Mariolatry. Like Ranier Werner Fassbinder, he is unimpressed with this new Germany, but unlike Fassbinder, he finds healthy traditions in Germany's rural past that can be revived. Even folk medicine is shown to be the equal of professional medicine. Karl Glasisch, a village farm worker who uses folk remedies for his illnesses, outlives all of his contemporaries.

REITZ'S CHOICE OF THE YEAR 1865 is no accident. It is one year before the German civil war between Prussia and Austria-Hungary, and five years before the German victory over France and the proclamation of the German national state. By 1866 it was clear that Germany would shortly emerge as a major power. Like many "Small Germans" of that period, Reitz would expand the walls surrounding Germany's medieval towns to the national borders so as to isolate the country from aliens. When faced with this kind of rampant nostalgia in the 1890s, Max Weber termed it *Harmoniesuppe* (harmony soup or stew); a fantasy of a conflict-free preindustrial social order in which power was absent and justice prevailed. And, indeed, there is very little serious conflict or exercise of power (*Herrschaft*) in Reitz's Schabbach.

In his essay of 1928 on "Conservative Thought," Karl Mannheim argued that the Marxian socialists purloined their critique of industrial capitalism from the romantic right. *Heimat*, which is bound to appeal to young German Greens and the few surviving pensioners who still believe that peasants are the fountain of youth for the German people, may once again denote a right-wing critique moving to the left. Germany, the home of romanticism in the early nineteenth century, may well be on the verge of another wave of rejection of the modern world for an idealized past. In the new village-centered German history of the twentieth century, Nazism and Hitler no longer occupy center stage; that is a conjuring trick that even a village magician would have found difficult to carry off. □

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In the Magazines

Stephen Jay Gould: "Darwinism Defined." *Discover*, January 1987.

Readers of the *New York Times* discovered last fall that Irving Kristol is not only an important philosopher, economist, political scientist, and historian, but a biologist, too. In an op–ed piece titled "Room for Darwin and the Bible," Kristol criticized scientific textbooks for their foolish "dogmatism" about evolutionary theory.

Kristol revealed that though evolution is "usually taught as an established scientific truth, it is nothing of the sort. It has too many lacunae." Though elementary- and high-school textbooks give no hint of this, biologists are bitterly divided about the idea of evolution. Most biologists "assume that the earth's species were not created by divine command . . . [but] they agree on little else." Some believe that change takes place gradually, some believe that it happens in quantum jumps; and "many younger biologists . . . are persuaded that . . . the very concept of evolution [is] questionable."

Kristol believes that "the religious fundamentalists are not far off the mark when they assert that evolution, as generally taught, has an unwarranted anti-religious edge to it." Evolution should be taught "more cautiously," for it is the "pseudo-scientific dogmatism" of today's textbooks "that has provoked the current religious reaction."

Stephen Jay Gould, who also knows a bit about biology, has a different view. Gould argues that Kristol is confusing two different aspects of evolution. Theories as to the *causes* of evolution are in dispute, and have been ever since Darwin. But the reality of evolution itself—the development of forms of life in "structurally intermediate stages"—is accepted by all biologists. "Einstein's theory of gravitation replaced Newton's," Gould writes, "but apples did not suspend themselves in mid-air pending the outcome."

Gould gives examples from human, plant, and animal life to show that "the fact of evolution is as well established as anything in science (as secure as the revolution of the earth about the sun). . . ." "Consider the evidence for human evolution in Africa. . . . We have a temporal sequence displaying clear trends in a suite of features, including threefold increase of brain size and corresponding decrease of jaws and teeth. . . . What alternative can we suggest to evolution? Would God—for some inscrutable reason, or merely to test our faith—create five species, one after the other . . . to mimic a continuous trend of evolutionary change?"

In Gould's view, Kristol's belief that evolution is still in doubt stems from a misunderstanding of scientific method. Contrary to what we learn in high school, science does not always involve controlled laboratory experiments yielding replicable results: many scientific problems simply can't be approached that way. "Direct vision isn't the only, or even the usual, method of inference in science. We don't see electrons, or quarks, or chemical bonds, any more than we see small dinosaurs evolve into birds, or India crash into Asia to raise the Himalayas."

Finally, Gould considers Kristol's claim that "the current teaching of evolution in our public schools does indeed have an ideological bias against religious belief." Kristol provides no evidence for this claim; and Gould more or less dismisses it as a *non sequitur*. "[W]hat challenge can the facts of nature pose to our own decisions about the moral value of our lives? . . . Science can no more answer the questions of how we ought to live than religion can decree the age of the earth."

After untangling one particularly unruly knot of misconceptions, Gould comments, "Our genealogy hasn't been threatened, but my geniality has almost succumbed." It doesn't, of course—it never does. Gould is a marvel. With wit, with modesty, with literary grace, he puts across serious scientific ideas in language even I can understand. What I can't figure out is how he does it.

BRIAN MORTON

Walter Williams: "Civil Rightsspeak." *New Perspectives*, Winter/Spring 1986. Available from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 29492.

Writing in the journal of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Williams sets out to expose the "linguistic sleights of hand" that have confused the civil rights debate.

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He establishes one linguistic truth beyond doubt. In the age of Reagan, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has become a contradiction in terms.

Williams, a neoconservative economist, argues that the very term "civil rights" is routinely misused. A true right—such as freedom of speech or religion—is "an entitlement that all Americans hold simultaneously without contradiction." My right to speak does not infringe on any of your rights. By contrast, we cannot properly speak of the right to housing, food, or work, for these aren't rights at all, but "wishes." If I have a right to housing even though I can't afford it, others must have an obligation to provide me with housing. "The 'right' of one diminishes the right of another. In other words, the 'right' to housing requires government, through taxation, to reduce another's right to his earnings."

From his discussion of rights and wishes, Williams draws this moral: government "cannot create an advantage for one American without creating a disadvantage for another." Affirmative action programs are therefore morally illegitimate.

Even if the means favored by civil rights advocates were not illegitimate, the ends they seek would still be misplaced. Civil rights advocates believe that "segregation" still exists in America, and seek to eliminate it; but this belief, according to Williams, rests on another linguistic error. It's improper to speak of segregation in today's U.S., for the simple reason that the legal structures of segregation have been abolished. One can't, for instance, speak of any of America's schools as segregated, "since there are no longer legal barriers to keep blacks who reside in a school district from attending its schools."

Those who contend that many U.S. schools are "de facto segregated" are really saying that they lack a "representative racial mix." But this makes schools no different from "ice hockey games, churches, professional bowling, classical music concerts," etc. Just because different ethnic groups are not represented proportionately in a given activity, it does not follow that discrimination is involved. Williams goes so far as to say that mandatory integration, because it uses the law to change the racial composition of schools, "has more in common with segregation than it does with desegregation."

Can government do anything at all to further civil rights? Yes. It can ensure "that rights to voluntary exchanges are not infringed on by third parties. . . . Indeed, it has been precisely that duty which government has historically failed to fulfill for black Americans. Slavery is the greatest example of failing to protect rights." In this analysis, slavery was an evil chiefly because it impeded the orderly functioning of the free market. A little like import quotas, but even worse.

It should be clear that Williams is eminently qualified to speak about "linguistic sleights of hand."

Consider his discussion of rights and "wishes." He promises to establish "precise and operationally useful word definitions" so that we can "address the issues properly," but the definitions he ends up with are merely eccentric. The class of rights that Williams tries to define out of existence is recognized by everyone in our society. The right of every child to an education, for example, "requires government, through taxation, to reduce another's right to his earnings," and therefore, in Williams's terms, "diminishes the rights of others." Does Williams define the right to an education as a mere "wish"? Does he want to do away with it?

Many of our rights involve restrictions on the wealth or freedom of some individuals. It could hardly be otherwise. As Michael Walzer has written, every state in history has been in some sense a welfare state—has featured a system of communal provisions. Any such system will involve certain "disadvantages" and social tensions. Williams is dreaming if he thinks society could be organized in any other fashion.

In any case, the claim that "government cannot create an advantage for one American without creating a disadvantage for another" rests on an arbitrary idea of advantages. In William's terms I incur a "disadvantage" when I pay taxes to help finance the food stamp program. But why does he assume that this expenditure pains me more than it would pain me to live in a society that lets people starve?

Williams's comments about discrimination are on the same level. He argues that many occupational differences among ethnic groups are the result not of discrimination but of differing "preferences." This is true, but it isn't serious. The case for affirmative action can't be refuted by pointing, as he does, to the imbalance between blacks and Jews in major league baseball: I know of no civil rights advocate who wants to bench Dwight Gooden and replace him with Elie Wiesel. No one believes that the ethnic composition of every profession should mirror that of the country as a whole.

The real problem can't be so easily disposed of. As Herman Schwartz has written, "only 3 percent of the nation's lawyers and doctors are black and only 4 percent of its managers, but over 50 percent

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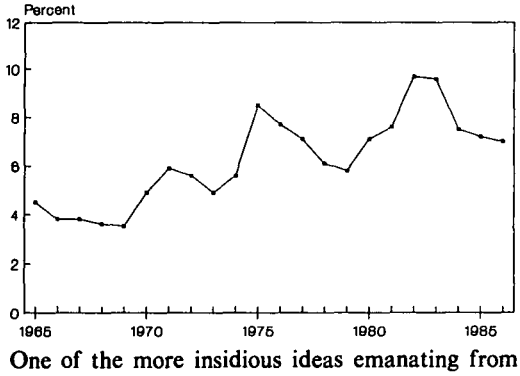
of its maids and garbage collectors." Are these "statistical disparities" also the result of differing "preferences"? The truth is that black people in America are still massively disenfranchised; it's disappointing to see Williams try to sneak past the problem by talking about baseball and bowling. The civil rights debate is serious. Why is this man clowning around?

B.M.

Richard Krashevski: "What is Full Employment?" Challenge, November/December 1986. Available from 80 Business Park Drive, Armonk, N.Y. 10504.

After more than three years of economic recovery the unemployment rate hovers around 7 percent. Not long ago this level of unemployment would have been seen as a sign of recession. Between World War II and 1980 the only time unemployment rose above 7 percent was in the deep recession of the mid 1970s. The official unemployment rate, it should be noted, seriously understates the extent of unemployment. The "real" unemployment rate, which includes involuntary part-time workers and discouraged workers, is almost double.

CIVILIAN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE 1965-1986



One of the more insidious ideas emanating from economics departments in recent years is the notion that 6 or 7 percent unemployment (between seven and eight million people) is "full employment." Thus, when the unemployment rate was 6.7 percent, Herbert Stein, former chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers and currently at the American Enterprise Institute, asserted "the nation is now at full employment." President Reagan has made similar claims.

As the graph shows, each successive business cycle has been characterized by higher unemployment rates. We seem light years from 1969 when, in the context of 3.5 percent unemployment, an article in the Brookings Papers was titled, "Why is the Unemployment Rate So High at Full Employment?" It is a good question, to which now we have to add, "Why Does the Definition of Full Employment Keep Changing?"

The argument runs something like this. In the 1960s it was possible to achieve 4 percent unemployment without inflation. But the shifting composition of the work force toward more unemployment-prone workers—the entrance of baby boomers into the job market, the steady increase in the number of working women—presumably made it more difficult to achieve full employment without simultaneously increasing inflation.

Whatever plausibility this argument once had has been discredited by Richard Krashevski, an AFL-CIO economist. Krashevski calculates what the annual unemployment rates would have been over the past two decades if the labor force share of 12 major demographic categories (based on age, race, and sex) had remained exactly the same as in 1965. The result is a series of unemployment rates adjusted to remove the effects of changes in the demographic composition of the labor force. Krashevski's analysis demonstrates that by 1985, changes in the work force account for only 0.1 percent of the rise in the unemployment rate.

Krashevski argues that, in fact, the labor force in the 1980s is changing in ways that should favor much *lower* unemployment rates. After peaking in the late 1970s, the share of 16- 24-year-olds in the labor force is the same as it was in the mid-1960s. In the 1980s the unemployment rate for women is lower than for the rest of the labor force. Thus, the increasing number of women in the labor force has *reduced* the unemployment rate.

Krashevski concludes:

> Demographic weighting can account for only a small part of the worsening jobless of the 1970s and the early 1980s, and provides no explanation for unemployment's two-year standstill at 7 percent.

Unemployment is caused by slow economic growth and inadequate trade, industrial, and labor-market policies. It is neither "natural" nor "inevitable." Uncomfortable news to both major parties, who perhaps thought they had a good excuse for their inaction on unemployment.

MARK LEVINSON

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Rose Laub Coser

The Women's Movement and Conservative Attacks

A LESSER LIFE: THE MYTH OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION IN AMERICA, by Sylvia Ann Hewlett. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1986. 461 pp. $17.95.

This book is about motherhood. Its main thrust is a call for a national policy that would support women as mothers. The author shows that the United States hardly has any such policy and in this respect differs sharply from other industrialized countries. Linked to this is the notion that women are special, because bearing children is their "privilege and responsibility." The women's movement—so the author asserts—has neglected the issue of the burden that women face in regard to childbearing and childrearing. Feminists in general, she says, are only interested in careers for women, but not in the real problems of women. Unfortunately, she overstates her point.

In her best chapter, Hewlett recounts her own experience, describing the humiliations she suffered in the hospital and at her job after her return. I have always wondered why, until recently, there has been so little protest about the way childbearing mothers are treated in some hospitals—an utter lack of sympathy, often with hostile nurses, and one's own physician not even showing up during the many hours of labor. Alice Rossi's writing on the subject is a memorable exception.

Hewlett's story is gripping indeed. She did not get any maternity leave at Barnard where she was teaching. She describes how she felt about having to rush back to her teaching job after a short ten days, and how she lacked support from her colleagues, who even criticized her for bringing her baby to school.

This traumatic experience seems to have been fruitful. Not only did it induce her to write this book, but she got an important position at the Economic Policy Council. And it also encouraged her to work actively for what she believes in, as when she set up a Family Policy Panel at the Economic Policy Council. However, her trouble started as soon as she convened her panel, and continued. Neither the men, nor the few women whom she had invited, took much interest in the problems she presented. The few who were committed had to work extremely hard to formulate a family policy, which they finally did.

Her call for better family policy seems to have gotten some hearings. I understand that Barnard has just established a parental leave policy—one better than Hewlett's proposal for maternal leave only. And a bill has been introduced in the House, the "Parental and Medical Leave Act of 1986," which would give men and women up to eighteen months of unpaid leave and job guarantees when their children are born.

SO MUCH FOR THE GOOD NEWS. Now for the bad. Hewlett's scholarship on a number of issues leaves much to be desired; in her advocacy of laws protecting women, and her acceptance of Phyllis Schlafly's appeal to oppose the Equal Rights Amendment, she talks herself into a frenzy, proceeds by exaggeration, and ignores contrary evidence.

An example of sloppy scholarship is her criticism of Freud and Piaget, whom she holds responsible for keeping women close to home and hearth in the 1950s. I shall not dwell on her perfunctory treatment of Freud—not once quoting him, or any scholarly source, for it is indeed possible to trace a watered-down type of psychoanalytically influenced psychology to some of Freud's writings superficially understood.

What Hewlett has to say about Piaget is sheer

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misrepresentation. She misleads the reader by implying that Piaget is responsible for encouraging the mothers of the 1950s to speed up the cognitive development of their children. As authorities on the subject she quotes the *Wall Street Journal* and Burton White (not referenced)—a psychologist who is an outspoken opponent of child care centers (the scarcity of which is one of Hewlett's main peeves). As evidence she offers a ridiculous example of a mother who brought her nine-month-old baby to something called the "Better Baby Institute" in Philadelphia for a course entitled "How to Multiply Your Baby's Intelligence," a "course aimed at teaching mothers how to train their babies to speak and read many languages, doing mathematics, horseback-riding and playing the violin by age two." In fact, Piaget's theory states the opposite, namely that all children develop in well-specified stages that cannot be skipped. True, in a footnote she admits that Piaget did not advocate any speedup in learning, but most readers do not turn to footnotes at the end of the book, and are therefore left with Hewlett's conclusion that Piaget advocated such "weighty and time-consuming responsibilities" to be shouldered by the modern mother.

IN HER MAIN MESSAGE, namely her advocacy of laws protecting women, there is a serious misrepresentation related to the Garland case. Lillian Garland lost her job at the California Federal Savings and Loan Association in Los Angeles after taking two months off for the birth of her child. Since California law entitled women to up to four months unpaid leave for childbirth, she challenged her employer's refusal to reinstate her. The opening of the case resulted in repeal of the law by a federal court. The American Civil Liberties Union and the National Organization for Women filed briefs supporting the court's decision, as they favored equal treatment of men and women. Here is how Hewlett interprets "equal treatment": "After all, anyone can have a skiing accident, but only women can have babies, so if you apply the principle of equal treatment, skiing accidents qualify and childbirth doesn't." This is sheer sophistry. The equality for which NOW and the ACLU stand does not refer to the reason for incapacitation, but to the fact itself, no matter what its cause. Why is it wrong for feminists to state that anyone, man or woman, could be incapacitated for some time, and should be guaranteed a job upon return?

Although Hewlett briefly acknowledges that protective laws can be abused, she passes over the seriousness of the problem. Patricia Cayo Sexton has shown that such laws can be used to keep women down by making it possible to specify the jobs in such a way as to exclude them legally.[1] What I learn from Sexton is that if some women should be assured their jobs after childbirth, so should men after serious illness. True, many women cannot lift heavy objects, and certainly not when they are pregnant. If and when they cannot, they should be given another type of work, and not a lower pay. And so should those men who cannot lift heavy objects either. All workers need protection on the job.

Hewlett advocates protective laws because women are different since they bear children, and children, she says, are our "most important national resource." But is it really, as she says, women's "privilege and responsibility" to bear children for the sake of "our collective future"? Couldn't our collective future be served better by restricting childbearing, by opposing the pronatalist coercion (as Judith Blake calls it) of our culture, with its glorification of motherhood and its stigmatizing of single and infertile women? As to "privilege," many mothers would be better off not having children, and for many children it would be better not to be born.

I completely share—and so would all feminists—Hewlett's indignation about the lack of child care centers in our country. But it is incomprehensible to me that she should blame feminists for "hostility toward women and children." ("The modern women's movement . . . has been profoundly anti-children and anti-motherhood" is one of her many outrageous statements.) It was, after all, Nixon and not NOW who vetoed the Child Development Act, which would have established child care centers all over the country. Hewlett has nothing stronger to say about this tragic blow to the lives of women and children than that it was "unfortunate."

HEWLETT ENGAGES IN THE FAMILIAR device of scapegoating by blaming those who are powerless, namely feminists, and making them seem all-powerful in neglecting the issue of parenting. Like all scapegoaters, she resorts to name-calling: she speaks of the "chic, liberal women of NOW" (I know Hewlett to be not exactly dowdy herself), and when referring to the young women who started out in the civil rights movement and discovered that even there they were discriminated against, she says: "They were through being menial servants and unpaid prostitutes to left-wing men. . . ." Who is being hostile?

Nor does she indict as "profoundly anti-children and anti-motherhood" such misogynistic publications as *Playboy*, which directly attack family life

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by protesting against men having to support women and children. She has a short chapter on what she calls the male rebellion, reminiscent of, if milder than, Barbara Ehrenreich's chapter on that subject in *The Hearts of Men*, which she doesn't mention. She exempts from responsibility this mass-media appeal to millions of American men to abandon wives and children.

I do not believe, as Hewlett does, that this rebellion is an attack on the domesticity of the 1950s. *Playboy* was started in 1953, too early for such a response. I might point out that the attack on women was already articulated in 1942 by Philip Wylie in *Generation of Vipers*. The anti-mom complex was a war and immediate post-war response to the emancipation of women during the war, when they got good jobs and good pay, and liked it. No sooner had they quit their jobs to make room for "the boys who came back from the war," than they returned to jobs. For it is exactly in the 1950s, even as pop magazines and many a social scientist extolled the virtues of motherhood, that jobs for women opened. It is not true, as Hewlett claims, that the period of the 1950s was extraordinary in keeping women at home, devoted to domesticity. The statistics about the change in women's roles speak a different story. As Valerie Oppenheimer has shown in her painstaking demographic analysis, this was the time when the demand for women workers increased at the same time that the traditional supply of women—young unmarrieds—had fallen off.[2] The latter trend was due to the low birthrate during the 1930s and to women's longer years in school. The rise in demand arose in large part from an increase in administration, which followed the introduction of automation and industrial expansion; as we know, the office grows faster than the factory. Women were needed for office work as well as for the expanding service industries, and for tending the booming babies. Women responded to the demand, and for the first time in American history, married women and women with children took jobs in industry and commerce on a large scale.

While pop magazines and some psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, and sociologists extolled the virtues of domesticity, women were quietly going back to work. And as the hostility of writers who wrote for *Playboy*, and others, was mainly directed at women who expected to be supported by their husbands "and were doing nothing," the hostility of the child-rearing experts was directed, as Hewlett notes elsewhere, at the working mother. Women were damned if they did and damned if they did not go out to work. After Wylie's *Generation of Vipers*, the anti-mom complex grew in the 1940s and 1950s with slurs such as "the overprotective mother" and "the domineering mother" (a household term in American psychiatry), and reached its height in the 1960s with Dan Greenburg's *How to Be a Jewish Mother*.

The worst part of Hewlett's book is, I believe, the chapter denouncing the fight for the Equal Rights Amendment. Here, with the fanaticism of the convert, she argues with a stridency that is about to land her in the camp of the opponents of women's rights. It is possible to agree with Hewlett that the defeat of the ERA was due (I would add; in some small measure yet to be identified) to the fact that Schlafly's demagogic campaign convinced many American women that the ERA would undermine women's privileges as wives and mothers. But to realize this does not justify her "great sympathy for the Schlafly campaign." My point is not that Schlafly is a conservative, as Hewlett tells us. I can agree with some conservatives on some issues. But, as Barbara Ehrenreich shows in great detail, Schlafly was, if not a member, at least close to the Birchites, which Hewlett does *not* tell us. Schlafly believed that the Republican party was, in her own words, taken over by a "small group of secret kingmakers using hidden persuaders and psychological warfare techniques" to advance the interests of "the Red Empire." Has Hewlett ever wondered what Schlafly would think of Hewlett's opinion that the best thing for American women would be to organize in trade unions? Nor would Schlafly have any sympathy for Hewlett's criticism of the wage gap and her call for equal wages. Schlafly hates unions and precisely those political groups that Hewlett says feminists should ally themselves with.

What I don't quite understand about Hewlett is that she would make herself the enemy of those whose goals she shares, namely feminists, to embrace the cause of someone who is hostile to everything Hewlett herself stands for. And that she would criticize only mildly the conservative administration that is responsible for the lack of an insightful family policy Hewlett advocates. For, compared with the venom she pours on feminists, her criticism of our national leaders is mild indeed.

It seems to me that, some of her contradictory intentions notwithstanding, Sylvia Hewlett is consistently conservative.

Item: While she minces no words in criticizing feminists for neglecting women and children, the men go scot-free. She seems to accept the fact that only 6 percent of fathers participate in child care

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and household work, and leaves it at that, not expecting that men can change their ways. In fact, men in general take on more responsibilities than in the past, and could be induced to do more. Even if the numerical change is small, the culture has changed. Not that sexism is dead. As a matter of fact, while women might be criticized for bringing a child to work, men who do so are being congratulated for being so generous as to "help out"! That's fine with me, hypocrisy being the tribute that vice pays to virtue!

Item: She finds the Human Capital theory "convincing" since it argues "that the wage gap can be largely explained by the interruptions that mark women's work lives." But she has not examined some eminent critics of this theory (for example, Mark Granovetter) who show that to the extent that the wage gap can be accounted for by interruptions in women's careers, it is largely due to discrimination by employers.[3] As a matter of fact the case Hewlett uses to illustrate the Human Capital theory is precisely an example of such discrimination. She tells of Susan, whose career was permanently stalled because she knew that "No one wants a gray-haired lady on the staff of the National Security Council. Those slots are strictly for the up-and-coming thirty-year-olds." Like Susan, Hewlett simply accepts the fact that, in the case of middle-aged and older women, employers decide that an interruption in their work lowers the value of their performance whether or not it actually does.

The Human Capital theory is clearly a conservative one, based on the present state of discriminatory practice. Could one not envisage that employers could be convinced, or forced, to stop discriminating by hiring women on their merit rather than on the basis of their life cycle?

Item: Hewlett criticizes consciousness-raising groups within the women's movement because, she says, these focus on interpersonal relationships and personal experiences rather than on external reality and political action. This is, I believe, a dogmatic stance, as if one were not able to do both. Polarizing the issues is a characteristic of her thinking. "If material reality permits women to become effective wives and mothers *and* [emphasis in the original] productive workers in the world beyond the home, *then and only then* [emphasis mine] can they develop their consciousness and fullfill their human potential." The implication here is that material reality determines consciousness—not such a novel idea, and true enough. But the reverse statement is equally true, namely that individuals, especially if they are embedded in a social movement, help shape reality. The case of Susan is again instructive here: When she was first offered the job at the National Security Council, she felt she could not accept it because she was having her second child and the family was living in a suburb. Had Susan's consciousness been raised, she might have persuaded her husband to move to the city. Is there nothing women *and* men can do to effect change in their own reality, in addition to fighting for a better national policy?

A social movement gains its strength from the consciousness of its members. Hewlett neglects the notion that change does not come only from above and that even those who are powerless can make things happen.

Item: When setting up her Family Panel at the Economic Policy Council, she found it "important to include . . . prominent men in this work." Although I don't object to such tactical maneuvers, I find it both morally and politically insensitive that she "never thought it appropriate to involve a large contingent from the women's movement." Her implicit belief that change can come only from above blinds her to activities at the grassroots.

Hewlett ignores activities of women at the local level. Feminists did not only fight for the ERA as Hewlett believes. Together with other women they fought for child care centers, and obtained at least some. In every corner of America women have been getting together to fight for exactly what she stands for—equal pay, parental leave, child care centers—and achieve piecemeal local results, even if not as fundamental as she (and I) would wish.

Our national leaders, or the "prominent men" whom Hewlett called on, will not move—as she found out—because one person, no matter how clever, asks them to do so. They will do nothing much for women unless their eardrums are ready to burst from the noise that women all over the country make with their rightful claims. Unless she allies with the feminists whom she now disdains, Hewlett will not get far with her complaints. I hope she has a change of heart. □

Notes

[1] Patricia Cayo Sexton, "Women Debate the Equal Rights Amendment," *Dissent* (1, 1971), pp. 14-18.

[2] Valerie Oppenheimer, "Demographic Influence on Female Employment and the Status of Women," *American Journal of Sociology*, 78 (1979), pp. 946-961.

[3] Mark Granovetter, "Toward a Sociological Theory of Income Differences, in Ivan Berg, ed., *Sociological Perspectives on Labor Markets* (Orlando, Fla.: Academic Press, 1981).

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Dennis Wrong

The Purge and the Professors

NO IVORY TOWER: McCARTHYISM AND THE UNIVERSITIES, by Ellen W. Schrecker. New York: Oxford University Press. 437 pp. $20.95.

Philosophers of social science have identified description, explanation, and evaluation as three distinct ways of assessing any historical phenomenon. If this triad is applied to Ellen Schrecker's study of McCarthyism and American higher education, she earns high if not quite the highest marks for description, a solidly acceptable grade for overall evaluation, but not much more than a pass for explanation. She is excellent in telling us what happened, and her judgment that the whole experience was pointless and demeaning is scarcely open to doubt. She does not, however, do justice to the political and historical context of the late 1940s and early 1950s when unprecedented and never-since-repeated official investigations of the political beliefs and associations of teachers took place at a time of national concern over the alleged infiltration of American society by Communists.

Schrecker reports in detail on the Rapp-Coudert Committee investigation of Communists on the faculty of the New York City colleges nearly a decade before the alarms of the cold war; on the University of California oath controversy in the late 1940s; and on the special situation of physical scientists requiring security clearances to do nuclear research. The issue of the rights of teachers to refuse to provide information to government agencies and university administrations first emerged at the University of Washington in 1948. The dismissal of three tenured faculty members for refusing to answer questions asked by a state legislative committee set the pattern for the next five or six years when the notorious committees of Congress, including the House Committee on Un-American Activities and the Senate subcommittees chaired by Senators McCarthy, Jenner, and McCarran, directed their attention to Communists in higher education. Most major universities were investigated and several score faculty members, including a few who were tenured, lost their jobs, the majority for pleading the Fifth Amendment when questioned about their present or, far more frequently, past membership in the Communist party (CP).

Schrecker's major new source material is the interviews she conducted with nearly all persons still living who lost their academic jobs for refusing to cooperate with the committees as well as the few who cooperated to the extent of "naming names." She also draws on a number of earlier interviews conducted by others. She makes it unmistakably clear at the outset that charges of past or present CP membership, not Marxist, radical, or "progressive" opinions as such, were what endangered the jobs of faculty members. (She finds only three cases, each involving rather special circumstances, where this was not the case.) Nevertheless, she constantly refers to her subjects as "left-wing activists," "idealists," "political non-conformists," "dissenters," "anti-authoritarians," "radicals of one sort or another," "critics of the political status quo," or "absolute civil libertarians." This conveys the clear impression that it was these qualities that brought them under suspicion, as so much retrospective mythicizing of the period has maintained. Schrecker's subjects undoubtedly preferred, and still prefer, to see themselves as victims of persecution for their advanced or "critical" ideas, but she need not have taken their self-definitions at quite such face value. What happened was bad enough without such imprecision, which also obscures just why it happened.

I STARTED MY ACADEMIC CAREER during those years, taught full-time or part-time at three universities that figure prominently in Schrecker's account, was a graduate student at a fourth, and actually came into contact with several of her subjects. Since my recollections have influenced my view of the book, I shall make a point of specifying them where relevant.

Schrecker insists repeatedly that her subjects did not proselytize in the classroom and even made a special effort to conceal from students not only their affiliation with the CP but, out of a principled belief in "objectivity," their general social and political views. Thirty or forty years ago even Communist professors probably drew a sharper line between scholarship and partisanship than later New Left radicals who assailed the norm of "value-freedom." But Schrecker strains my credulity. I took a course in 1947 from a teacher she mentions several times, a former Communist who pleaded the Fifth Amendment but did not lose his job, his academic superiors defending him on the grounds that he never used his classes "for propaganda purposes." Although his subject was fairly

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remote from politics, he managed to refer frequently to how well its problems were handled in the Soviet Union. One day a young woman, evidently well informed from Trotskyist sources, challenged him and I backed her up. The teacher became quite flustered and red in the face, vehemently rejecting our arguments. Perhaps there was no connection, but he gave me the lowest grade I received in graduate school.

Former students of another professor whom Schrecker interviewed, who lost his job but was ultimately vindicated by the courts, have told me that he habitually gave low grades to Trotskyists and defended doing so when confronted by them in his office. Of course Communist professors didn't pass out party cards or even copies of the *Daily Worker* in class, but it is hard to believe that many of them suppressed their views where they were relevant—Marxism, after all, is itself a heavily scholastic doctrine, not an inward spiritual faith. And Marxists, except for a tiny few, were at this time pro-Soviet. Perhaps Schrecker should also have interviewed a few of her subjects' former students.

It would, I am fully persuaded, have been preferable to the purge of Communist-linked teachers that took place to have simply ignored and left them all alone, even if some of them may have indoctrinated like mad in the classroom and flunked anti-Communist students right and left. But let us not exaggerate the effects of what happened, treating it as if it were a veritable fascist era in American life. The main political consequence of McCarthyism was to provide a new target of protest for the dying left, sinking under the incubus of the CP, and a few years later to lay the foundations for a revitalized campus radicalism free of that incubus. The New Left student movement, let us not forget, first won wide public notice by demonstrating in 1960 against a HUAC hearing in San Francisco. The disposition of a whole generation of academic leftists to see the essence of politics as the public display of one's sentiments through demonstrations, protest marches, signing petitions, and wearing buttons is also a heritage of the revolt against McCarthyism and the fearful silence it is alleged to have induced.

Schrecker contends that conformity and mediocrity descended on the campus following the ravages of McCarthyism. That was hardly my impression as a university teacher in the late 1950s. There was certainly a short-lived decline in radical activism. There were many causes for this, the most important perhaps being the decimation of the CP not by McCarthyism but in shocked reaction to Khrushchev's "secret speech"of 1956. The CP, as Schrecker acknowledges, had been the major force on the American left since the 1930s. The party had suffered losses since 1948, but the exodus of members after the speech became known was of the order of 90 percent, reducing the CP to the minuscule political sect it is today. Only a few years elapsed, however, before a new generation of political radicals and "countercultural" rebels took over the campuses, inspired in part by the writings of Herbert Marcuse, C. Wright Mills, and Norman O. Brown, all of them professors published in the 1950s who were by no means invisible presences at their own or other universities.

SCHRECKER REPEATS the oft-told tale that the discrediting of leading East Asian scholars deprived the United States of expert advice that might have prevented its disastrous involvement in Vietnam. But she fails to mention that nearly all the academic authorities on Indochina actively supported the war until very late in the day. She misreports the import of Lazarsfeld and Thielens's 1958 survey, *The Academic Mind*, which tended to refute rather than confirm Robert Hutchins's claim that "the spirit of the teaching profession" was being "crushed by McCarthyism." The situation may have been different in the natural sciences, which provided a considerable number of Schrecker's victims, but, her judgment to the contrary notwithstanding, the humanities and the social sciences do not seem to have suffered any marked deterioration in intellectual quality as a result of the purge. By the late 1940s, the few remaining Communists in these fields were largely second-raters; this may also have been true in lesser degree of those who had joined and left the party earlier as distinct from merely being in sympathy with it for a short time. Political activism and productive scholarship are likely to be at odds, as Schrecker herself notes.

Several younger purge victims in the humanities and social sciences, most of them at Harvard, an irresistible target for the purgers, later had distinguished academic careers that were only briefly interrupted by their dismissals. By far the most outstanding figure lost for good to American scholarship as a result of the Red purge was the late Sir Moses I. Finley, who emigrated to Britain, became one of the world's foremost classical historians, won a chair at Cambridge, and was knighted. I knew him slightly when we were both teaching at the Newark branch of Rutgers; a year later would come the fateful encounter with congressional investigators that led to his dismissal from Rutgers after he pleaded the Fifth Amendment rather than

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name names. He stood out as a lively, articulate, wisecracking intelligence who brightened up the somnolent atmosphere of the faculty coffee lounge whenever he entered it between class periods. I was introduced to him by a colleague who had known him as a fellow student at the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research during its brief tenure at Columbia. Both of them were highly sophisticated Marxists, neither pro-Soviet nor anti-Stalinist left nor supporters of American cold war policies.

WHY DID IT HAPPEN and why at that particular time? Schrecker is a thorough and conscientious enough scholar to have assembled all the ingredients required for an answer. She fails, however, to bring them into central focus, falling back on facile moralizing about the venality and demagoguery of congressional politicians, the mendacity of "professional" ex-Communist witnesses, the spinelessness under pressure of university administrations, and the strictly conditional nature of the commitment of both faculty and administrators to civil liberties in general and academic freedom in particular. Nathan Glazer has argued that Schrecker views her subject entirely in the context of the history of academic freedom whereas it should also be viewed within the context of the history of American Communism. I more or less agree with that, but from the standpoint of explaining the purge and the response to it the most important context, I think, is the history of national mobilization in wartime.

The purge occurred only a few years after the Second World War at a time of what had shortly before been christened "cold" rather than "hot" (that is, shooting) war with the Soviet Union. The height of the purge coincided with a full though undeclared war between the United States and a lesser Asian Communist state and for a time even with China, the largest and second most powerful Communist state. There was, moreover, widespread apprehension, often amounting to virtual expectation, that a Third World War with the Soviet Union itself was imminent. In so ambiguous a situation, when the country was neither clearly at peace nor at war, whether or not sympathizers with the national enemy should be allowed their customary peacetime civil liberties was bound to become an issue. I remember liberals with little tolerance for ambiguity wishing for a formal declaration of war against North Korea to clarify the legal situation. (Like demands were made fifteen years later during the similarly undeclared war in Vietnam.)

Schrecker describes several of her subjects as "absolute" civil libertarians, but one wonders how many of them had opposed the restrictions on civil liberties imposed during the Second World War. The Communist party had strongly supported prosecution under the Smith Act of Trotskyists, as well as native fascists, and even refused to rescind this past support when its own leaders were prosecuted during the Cold War. Schrecker never so much as mentions the general restrictions on civil liberties during the Second World War. There were, of course, no profascist or pro-Japanese university teachers to speak of—at most a few pacifist opponents of the war—so academic freedom never became an issue.

She reports, however, in her opening chapter: "In many ways what happened to academic freedom during the First World War was similar to what would happen to it after the Second. Both times the entire nation was aroused against an external enemy whose alleged agents seemed both particularly menacing and readily identifiable." At the very end of the book, she observes that "Patriotism, not expedience, sustained the academic community's willingness to collaborate with McCarthyism." She is right both times, but fails to give sufficient weight to the implications of these statements. McCarthyism was the result of a spy scare following the discovery of several real spy rings and of the arousal or revival of a patriotic wartime mentality that had never fully subsided in the few years after 1945. Only incidentally did it involve a perception of leftist ideas as threatening established interests, although, of course, many right-wing demagogues and fanatics as well as opportunistic politicians jumped into the fray to try to link their ideological aversions and political adversaries to the new national enemy.

I met Chandler Davis, a mathematician who is one of Schrecker's leading informants, a few times when his wife, today a justly famous historian, and I were colleagues on the faculty of Brown University. Davis served six months in jail for having taken the principled risk of pleading the First rather than the Fifth Amendment before a congressional committee. The year after I left Brown, Natalie Davis telephoned to ask if I would put in a word to higher-ups in the Canadian government, where she knew I had connections, urging that her husband be granted permission to move to Canada, despite his "criminal" record. He wished to assume a teaching position there, his first, as Schrecker reports, since his dismissal a decade earlier from the University of Michigan and subsequent blacklisting. I was glad to oblige and Davis went on to teach at the University of Toronto, though I am sure the Canadian authorities would have let him in without my intervention. This happened in 1962.

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Would I have done the same thing ten years earlier when the purgers were in full throat and I was untenured, degree-less, and lacking (as I still do) U.S. citizenship? I think I would have, but some doubt is inevitable.

SCHRECKER'S FAITHFUL AND SCRUPULOUS documentation overwhelms one with a sense of the enormous waste, absurdity, and moral squalor of the whole business. One reflects gratefully, however, that the experience seems to have immunized us against any repetition, for there has been nothing remotely like it since, neither during the war in Vietnam nor in the course of the militantly anti-Soviet and right-wing Reagan administration. University authorities in the years of McCarthyism may often have bent with the prevailing winds against their own better judgment and their principles, believing that they were protecting their institutions from a gale of patriotic anger that could only grow stronger as war with the Soviet Union drew closer. Their dilemmas were real ones, although I agree with Schrecker's conclusion, supported by several examples she mentions, that a firmer stand protecting academic freedom might well have prevailed.

But this is inevitably a retrospective view. Its plausibility is enhanced by the rapidity with which the fears and obsessions of the early 1950s were dispelled by a surprising succession of events all occurring within less than four years. There was the death of Stalin, the end of the Korean war, the Senate censure of Joseph McCarthy, the "spirit of Geneva"—the first interlude of what was even then called "détente" in U.S.-Soviet relations—Khrushchev's speech that caused a crisis among Communists, and the Hungarian Revolution that deepened the crisis and exposed as fantasy right-wing Republican slogans of "rollback" in Eastern Europe. Court decisions that struck down the worst abuses of the purgers were probably as much an effect as a cause of the altered atmosphere. That the change took place so suddenly is one reason why we look back today on the McCarthy era as a bizarre, hysterical period of mindless madness and malice. Historical perspective involves both taking advantage of hindsight and trying to tell it as it was. Schrecker is better at the former than the latter.□

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H. Brand

Electoral Politics, Socialist Policy

SOCIALISTS AND THE BALLOT BOX. A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS, by Eric Thomas Chester. New York: Praeger, 173 pp. $28.95.

The author opposes the participation of socialists in the electoral politics of the Democratic party, arguing that such participation cannot advance socialist objectives since the Democratic party represents capitalist interests. Although it is intended to apply pressure from working people and minorities, such electoral (or "realignment") politics actually channels the pressure through such "bureaucratic" institutions as the trade unions. Militancy is dampened; open social struggle curbed.

The "reformist" approach of such organizations as the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) or one of its predecessors, the Socialist party, is contrary to "revolutionary" politics—a politics independent of establishment parties and their trade union allies. Instead, the author favors networks of "movement activities" that rally working people and the oppressed through organizations of their own generating to "direct action" and the "deepening of class consciousness." He would mobilize the rank and file to attack corporate power, despite the risks of repression. He does not promise success for his "revolutionary" politics. In the spirit of orthodox Marxism, he stresses the "strategic necessity" of independent political action, regardless of short-term popular support or prospect of success.

Though Chester's argument comes across as a sectarian tract, it would be an error to dismiss it. He argues as a radical democrat in urging that the broad masses participate in political and economic decisions. Moreover, he affords the reader a thoroughly researched history of socialist politics in the United States and in doing so outlines an alternative vision.

CHESTER DIVIDES HIS DISCUSSION into three parts, reflecting three historical eras: the Marxist tradition, including a survey of the position of Marx and Engels on the independence of working-class parties, and of the electoral experience of the Socialist

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party (SP) up to World War I; the Communist party (CP) and its electoral politics, including its Popular Front phase during the 1930s, exemplified by the relations between the CP and the early United Auto Workers; and the "Shachtmanite tendency" which, with the decline of the Communist party after the mid-1950s and the emergence of such major democratic socialist advocates as Michael Harrington and Irving Howe, shaped socialist electoral politics.

That the working class must have independent parties, or independent representation in the political bodies of its respective countries, has been in dispute at the least since the 1920s when a white-collar work force arose as a major political factor. The rise of this work force diluted the conception of "working class," hence the politics tailored to it. Once suffrage had been extended to male adults during the nineteenth century, all political parties became sensitive to workers' interests and competed for their vote. Great working-class parties came into being, yet their prime objectives consisted in attaining constitutional and economic rights. By contrast, the model envisioned by Marx and Engels (expressed in *The Civil War in France*) had been formed largely by the 1848 uprisings and the expectation that workers would seize power and transform society.

Ensuring the legal foundations of labor's rights, as institutionalized in the trade unions, lay behind the creation of the British Labour party in 1902. Workers had previously voted mostly for the Liberal party, and continued to do so until World War I. The Labour party arose in response to employer attacks on the financial viability of the unions. These attacks were effected through parliamentary actions, hence they had to be resisted in Parliament. Many of the Labour party's founders were socialists, but its program did not commit it to socialist aims. The rise of the Labour party did indeed expand the power of British workers, and represented an extension of democracy. Cautiously tailored to the framework of the country's political, juridical, and economic institutions, that rise was not a "revolutionary" development in the sense of 1848. However, Chester does not come to grips with this fact.

Chester briefly traces the meteoric electoral rise and subsequent swift decline of the Socialist party in the United States between the turn of the century and World War I. It elected a large number of municipal and state representatives, and won up to 6 percent of the vote in presidential elections. The party consistently maintained its independence from both major parties. Thus, its principled attitude "continues to be of interest to socialists today because it provides us with the only case study in U.S. history of a socialist party with a mass electoral base"—even if its policy planks are no longer relevant. But what are the lessons that can be drawn from the experience? It covered all too brief a span of time. Rereading James Weinstein's *Decline of American Socialism*, I suspect that the SP's very stance as sole repository of a true socialist politics in the United States was a factor in later preventing it from an alliance with the Farmer-Labor party of the early 1920s, which might have led to a mass third-party movement.

If not much can be learned from the SP experience during the first decades of this century, Chester for his part questions the meaning Michael Harrington has imputed to the Communist party's move into the Democratic party during the 1930s, which, in Harrington's words (as quoted by Chester), "allowed the American Communists to play a much more effective role in the U.S. than the Socialists." Chester refutes the notion that this had much to do with the CP's "effectiveness." The CP had earlier rejected any link with the Democrats, or support of Roosevelt. It reversed its position "in relation to the perceived needs of the Soviet state." Short-term considerations of "effectiveness" carried little if any weight. Beyond this (which Harrington would not deny), the CP's successes were not so much related to the "line" it espoused at any one time, but "because it was recognized as the U.S. representative of the Soviet government, and this attraction overrode in importance the specifics of the party on domestic matters." Only the Hitler-Stalin pact in August 1939 caused a significant loss in the party's membership.

Nor, according to Chester, could the organizational disintegration of the Socialist party during the mid-1930s be attributed to its continual criticism of Roosevelt's policies. Rather, it stemmed from a major split in the party, unrelated to its attitude toward the New Deal. In brief, those who, like Harrington, urge socialists to participate actively in the Democratic party have drawn the wrong inferences from the experience of radical parties during the New Deal period.

Chester's argument cannot be pursued here. Whether or not the Democratic party can be transformed into an instrument of social democracy has been, and remains, a political rather than a theoretical question. At any rate, Chester does not give due weight to the views of experienced practitioners like Norman Thomas. Thomas repeatedly stressed that socialist proposals had been adopted

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under the New Deal and later, and he eventually ceased to run for the presidency under the SP banner on that account.

With few exceptions, the leading advocates of the American socialist left modified, then abandoned, their one-time "revolutionary" stance. Even the exceptions (e.g., Julius Jacobson) moved to versions of democratic radicalism, away from a perspective of revolutionary transformation. Often, the erstwhile "revolutionary" radicals remained socialists in a moral, neo-Kantian sense, but their politics came to be "reformist" in method and objective. Chester traces this evolution in his discussion of the Shachtmanite tendency. It is an evolution of which he approves, so long as it is away from Leon Trotsky's conception of "democratic centralism." But he disapproves of its movement from the support of worker militants (as in the early UAW) and wartime worker protests, to support of more or less progressive trade union leaders, and later (after Max Shachtman had led the Independent Socialist League [ISL] into the Socialist party in 1956) to working within the Democratic party, and, in the case of Shachtman and some former ISL members, to what objectively amounted to support of the Vietnam War.

In his critical presentation of Michael Harrington's politics over the past thirty years, Chester makes a number of telling points. We cannot examine them here. What he fails to do is to situate his critique in the historical circumstances within which Harrington and his colleagues thought and acted. True, Chester didn't have that sort of book in mind. But can we understand Harrington's politics without reflecting upon this background? Three developments shaped it. First, there was the shattering defeat that the United States, in combination with the Soviet Union, inflicted upon European fascism. Some parts of the non-Stalinist left had believed during the 1930s that American society was itself drifting toward a form of fascism, and that this drift would be resisted by an ever more militant and revolutionary working class. Second, bourgeois democracy proved capable not only of defeating fascism abroad but also of stabilizing the economy at home. Chester notes that "The economic boom came as a tremendous shock to the Shachtman tendency, as it did to most U.S. socialists." As the boom waned, and as blacks claimed full social and economic equality during the 1960s, a threat on the right arose: George Wallace received a much greater proportion of votes in the 1968 and 1972 presidential elections than any socialist candidate ever had. That was surely a factor in leading Harrington and others like him to oppose the creation of a "third" party that might have weakened the traditional forces of the left, largely assembled in the Democratic party.

THERE WAS A THIRD DEVELOPMENT that likewise shaped the thinking of socialists like Harrington, Shachtman, and Howe: the consolidation of Stalinism, first in the Soviet Union, then in Eastern Europe, finally in some Third-World countries. Their view of the Vietnam War was bound to be influenced by their characterization of Stalinism as a new type of tyranny. Their critique of Vietnam-War protesters necessarily proceeded from that view. Chester chides Harrington for having opposed the Vietnam War on pragmatic grounds—its destructiveness and futility. Yet, on grounds of principle, that war made it difficult for a socialist to lend uncritical support to its opponents.

Chester urges that socialists commit themselves to an "independent politics . . . alongside . . . the militant rank and file of social movements." Who on the left would take exception? Yet, how is an independent politics or any politics sustained? Some sort of structuring, or creation of institutions, seems unavoidable. Otherwise, neither consistency of program nor continuity of movement is ensured. Big as the anti-Vietnam War protest movement was, it dissolved after that war was "Vietnamized" in the early 1970s.

Chester reproaches Harrington for his close links to the trade unions. True, Harrington may at times overstate his case, and DSA has muted its criticism of trade unions. But there are others who are much more aggressive in this respect. Let us note Herman Benson's Association for Union Democracy. Benson, often referred to by Chester as a fighter for rank-and-file rights, comes out of the same tradition as Harrington (and Shachtman!). The commitment of American socialists to the labor movement is in principle determined by ideological factors (not at issue here). Without this commitment, their politics would have little concrete meaning. At the same time, DSA's link to the Democratic party is more tenuous than Chester avers. Should the Democratic party or part of it be taken over by sections of the labor movement, or should labor's progressive wing found its own party, Harrington and his following would surely respond accordingly.

Chester's book has its flaws, as what work doesn't, but it remains a valuable contribution to the discussion. □

Coming in *Dissent*

Fred Block on unemployment

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25 Years of *The Other America*

We join with many other friends in celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of publication of our coeditor Michael Harrington's The Other America, the book that reminded America of its "invisible" poor. Mike continues to speak, write, and work for social justice, and he deserves every word of praise this occasion will bring him. We print below a few paragraphs from the almost equally famous review that Dwight Macdonald wrote in the New Yorker, helping to bring Mike's book to the attention of a large public (including the then President John F. Kennedy).—Eds.

Now Michael Harrington, an alumnus of the *Catholic Worker* and the Fund for the Republic who is at present a contributing editor of *Dissent* and the chief editor of the Socialist Party biweekly, *New America*, has written *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (Macmillan). In the admirably short space of under two hundred pages, he outlines the problem, describes in imaginative detail what it means to be poor in this country today, summarizes the findings of recent studies by economists and sociologists, and analyzes the reasons for the persistence of mass poverty in the midst of general prosperity. It is an excellent book—and a most important one.

My only serious criticism is that Mr. Harrington has popularized the treatment a bit too much. Not in the writing, which is on a decent level, but in a certain vagueness. There are no index, no bibliography, no reference footnotes. In our overspecialized culture, books like this tend to fall into two categories: Popular (no scholarly "apparatus") and Academic (too much). I favor something intermediate—why should the academics have *all* the footnotes? The lack of references means that the book is of limited use to future researchers and writers. A pity, since the author has brought together a great range of material. . . .

"Poverty is the parent of revolution and crime," Aristotle wrote. This is now a half truth—the last half. Our poor are alienated; they don't consider themselves part of society. But precisely because they don't they are not politically dangerous. It is people with "a stake in the country" who make revolutions. The best—though by no means the only—reason for worrying about the Other America is that its existence should make us feel uncomfortable.

The federal government is the only purposeful force—I assume wars are not purposeful—that can reduce the numbers of the poor and make their lives more bearable. . . . Since 1932, "the government"—local, state, and federal—has recognized a responsibility to provide its citizens with a subsistence living. Apples will never again be sold on the street by jobless accountants, it seems safe to predict, nor will any serious political leader ever again suggest that share-the-work and local charity can solve the problem of unemployment. "Nobody starves" in this country any more, but, like every social statistic, this is a tricky business. Nobody starves, but who can measure the starvation, not to be calculated by daily intake of proteins and calories, that reduces life for many of our poor to a long vestibule to death? Nobody starves, but every fourth citizen rubs along on a standard of living that is below what Mr. Harrington defines as "the minimal levels of health, housing, food, and education that our present stage of scientific knowledge specifies as necessary for life as it is now lived in the United States." Nobody starves, but a fourth of us are excluded from the common social existence. . . .

The problem is obvious: the persistence of mass poverty in a prosperous country. The solution is also obvious: to provide, out of taxes, the kind of subsidies that have always been given to the public schools (not to mention the police and fire departments and the post office)—subsidies that would raise incomes above the poverty level, so that every citizen could feel he is indeed such. "*Civis Romanus sum!*" cried St. Paul when he was threatened with flogging—and he was not flogged. Until our poor can be proud to say "*Civis Americanus sum!*," until the act of justice that would make this possible has been performed by the three-quarters of Americans who are not poor—until then the shame of the Other America will continue.

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LETTERS

The Battle Continues

Editors:

You invite the views of your readers on the Howe-Radosh debate on the Spanish Civil War (*Dissent*, Winter 1987).

My views can be briefly stated. Radosh has left Howe without a shred of "logic" or "morality." Indeed, Radosh's is the best statement of the case I have read anywhere (and an improvement on his original article in the *New Criterion*) and I am grateful to *Dissent* for publishing it.

Like many others of my generation, I was grievously (but perhaps, venially) wrong but, unlike Howe, I admit it. What is it that Howe wrote so sensibly long ago about "useful idiots"?

Elias M. Schwarzbart
New York, N.Y.

The Spanish Civil War Was Our Cause

Editors:

... To those of us who were coming of age in those years, the left socialist movement now had a fighting chance to thwart Fascism and Stalinism. We supported the war against Franco, but reserved our political disagreements with the existing Republican governments.... The deepest hopes and highest aspirations of the people were represented somewhere on the Republican side, buried at times by many contradictions, but still there. Yes, it was our cause and we lost it. Nine months later, the Stalin-Hitler pact was signed and WW II was on its way. An analogy may be made with Nicaragua today. We support the struggle of the people against the counterrevolution and the Somocistas, but we keep at arm's length from the Sandinistas who monopolize state power. We demand of our government to cease, and desist from its destabilization in Central America and its support of the *contras* but we also call for a more open society in Nicaragua, a sharing of power by the Sandinistas with other progressive groups within the trade union movement and the professional and small-scale entrepreneurial groups.

Though all of the above takes us far afield from Spain, it is an attempt to apply some lessons.... It's easy to be a Sandinista/neo-Stalinist or a *contra* pro-Reaganaut but it is hard to be a democratic socialist and, because we insist on that qualifying adjective, we have no easy way out.

J. E. Gladstone
Santa Cruz, California

Historical Second-Guessing

Editors:

Ronald Radosh's ideological commitments seem to have overcome his analytical talents. Let me give just a few examples:

1. In the beginning of the civil war, the Spanish Communist party was weak and negligible. The Spanish CP gained power and influence only after the Russians began to send arms and military advisers to Spain. The Communists gained influence very fast once it became clear that the Western democracies would not help the Spanish Republic. The Communists managed soon to transform the popular militia into a disciplined conscript army. But even then large sectors of the front, especially in Catalonia, were held by anarchists and independent leftists.

Radosh's kibbitzer view of the matter would then have advised the anti-Stalinist fighters to give up since the Communists now had a major stronghold in the government and the military. How silly can one get? It is easy enough to decree fifty years later, and from New York to boot, that the anti-Stalinists should desert; but how on earth would voices such as these have had an echo at that time and in that place?

Civil wars are not like poker games; you can't just throw your cards on the table and announce that you won't play anymore.

2. Radosh is a master of misleading analogies. Stalin imposed "People's Democracies" in Eastern and Central Europe because he had the military power to do so. But there was no Russian army in Spain, and, moreover, the Russian penetration of the Republican military and governmental structures was made possible only by the Republican disillusionment with the Western democracies who refused to come to their aid. I am not a soothsayer but I think that the chances of getting rid of the Stalinists if the Republicans had been successful were rather high. The Stalinists exploited the weakness of the republic and would have had a very bad time with a strong republic.

3. Radosh parades his militant anti-Stalinism, but he is in effect a defeatist. He seems to argue that whenever and wherever the Stalinists have established a foothold they will prevail. What about Tito? Sadat? Western Europe? In all these cases, the Stalinists suffered humiliating defeats. It is true that the Communists have established a foothold in the ranks of the South African liberation movement; but does this then mean that we relax our opposition to Mr. Botha?

Ideologists who paint only in black or white have no tolerance for the world's ambiguities. That is why they are of little help when it comes to analysis. Beware of the "terrible simplifiers" of whom Jacob Burckhardt warned us long ago.

Lewis A. Coser
Stony Brook, N.Y.

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What If?

Editors:

. . . As long as we are playing the game of "what if?", has Mr. Radosh considered "what if the Western democracies had poured material and financial aid into the Republic?" and why they did not? Why were the liberals so silent? Why are the conservatives always "soft on fascism"? How would history have been different if the conservatives really believed in democracy and if the liberal belief was strong enough to not fade out when the authoritarianism of the right really "puts its foot down"?

LAURENCE G. WOLF
Cincinnati, Ohio

Stay Tuned

Space does not permit us to publish more responses to the Spanish Civil War controversy in this issue. We shall return to it in the summer.—Eds. □

Union Mergers

Editors:

While generally agreeing with Bob Kuttner's sober assessment of the state of union organizing ("Will Unions Organize Again?", *Dissent*, Winter 1987), I'd like to correct any misleading impressions his article may have created regarding union mergers in the telecommunications industry and other organizing activity involving the Communications Workers of America (CWA).

First, Bob quotes a "disgusted CWA organizer"—me—on the subject of affiliation campaigns in which several different unions compete for the affections of a smaller AFL-CIO union or independent association by offering financial inducements to their top officers. Such affiliations, involving "small unions in declining industries . . . add nothing to labor's strength as a whole," the article contends.

Attempted buy-offs of the leadership of potential merger partners is, in fact, a common strategy used by larger unions hungry for new dues-paying members. But the one specific target of such campaigns mentioned in the article—the 5,000-member United Telegraph Workers (UTW) at Western Union—did not succumb to them in the manner implied.

I'm happy to report that a CWA-backed committee of rank-and-file members and local officers of the UTW organized significant grassroots opposition to merger offers from several other unions that seemed mainly interested in providing high-paid staff positions for incumbent UTW leaders.

UTW members voted instead to oust these officials and merge with CWA because it already represents the rest of Western Union's unionized work force. The UTW-CWA merger, therefore, had both an industrial logic—uniting the communications workers employed at Western in one union, the largest in the industry—and the immediate effect of facilitating more coordinated bargaining and contract enforcement activity within this financially troubled company.

It's worth noting also that CWA's recent bargaining and strike activity at AT&T and regional telephone companies like NYNEX and Bell Atlantic was likewise strengthened as a result of a series of similar mergers involving seven formerly independent unions representing over 35,000 telephone workers.

Membership growth of this sort by a union like CWA is, of course, no substitute for organization of entirely unorganized workers at fiercely anti-union firms like MCI and others in the telecommunications industry. But, in a period when—as Bob's article points out—it is very difficult to recruit large numbers of new members in the high-tech end of the private sector, a merger and affiliation strategy aimed at union consolidation makes considerable sense. It may, in fact, be the best and only way to maintain the organizational base needed for future large-scale recruitment drives involving unorganized workers exclusively.

STEVE EARLY
Arlington, Mass. □

The Neocons

Editors:

Irving Howe's reply to the portion of my letter that was published in your Winter 1987 issue leaves me a bit puzzled. In rebutting an example I offered of what I saw as a tendency on his part to substitute invective for careful analysis in his "The Spirit of the Times" essay (Fall 1986), Howe asserts that "[n]eoconservative writers have not, to [his] knowledge, tried to develop in a sustained way their charge that liberals and leftists are guilty of 'moral equivalence' . . . " but have chosen instead to "mutter this darkly."

That perception is accurate *only if one arbitrarily excludes foreign policy*—which Howe apparently goes on to do by explaining that the 1984 Oxford Union debate concerned only foreign policy, and not the relative morality of the domestic policies of the U.S. and the USSR. He thereby implies that his original essay similarly excluded criticism of "moral equivalence" to the extent that such charges concerned foreign policy.

What I find confusing about Howe's rebuttal is that nowhere in the original essay is there any hint that the neoconservative charges were limited to domestic policy. Nor, in his reply, does Howe offer any reason why foreign policy should be excluded. My own reading of

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neoconservative publications suggests the opposite. The attacks that I have read on the left's alleged belief in "moral equivalence" have been raised largely (if not exclusively) in the context of foreign policy.

Critics like Charles Krauthammer, Robert Tucker, and Owen Harries have indeed developed, "in a sustained way," their view that many liberals and leftists are unwilling to pursue foreign/national security policies that (from the neoconservative perspective) effectively protect U.S. interests and core values from an expansionist Soviet threat. This can, and often does, lead the critics to ask *why* such unwillingness exists. The answer they generally arrive at is that many on the left (a) don't properly understand the nature and extent of the Soviet threat, and/or (b) are unable, because of ideological utopianism or a sense of guilt ("Vietnam syndrome"), to bring themselves to support the military and intelligence capabilities that (neocons believe) are necessary to meet that threat.

Neoconservative analysts do sometimes charge that *in terms of practical politics* (and even occasionally in their public pronouncements) some leftists treat the foreign policies of Western democracies (and particularly the U.S.) as morally equivalent to those of the USSR. But I have read no assertions that, as a group, liberals and leftists believe there is no moral difference between the *domestic* policies pursued in the U.S. and the USSR.

One can certainly argue that the neocons are wrong in their analysis of leftist opposition to significant aspects of U.S. foreign policy. But it is both mistaken and misleading to simply ignore the foreign policy genesis of the neocon critique and claim that they are just a bunch of stupid so-and-sos who think that (all? most? some?) liberals and leftists believe "that Soviet totalitarianism and Western democracy are equally bad and repressive" in terms of domestic policy. Creating and killing off such straw men is neither challenging nor educational.

Robert M. Blair
Wheaton, Md.

Irving Howe Replies:

Even if the neocons could demonstrate that leftists (which?) "(a) don't understand the nature and extent of the Soviet threat, and/or (b) are unable . . . to bring themselves to support the military and intelligence capabilities that (neocons believe) are necessary to meet that threat"—[but which capability? *contras?* dealing with Khomeini?]—even then, dear Mr. Blair, they would not yet have offered sufficient evidence for the charge that the left believes in a "moral equivalence" theory. For it's possible to be guilty of both a and b as mentioned and yet not be guilty of "moral equivalence." It's also possible, by the way, to believe that over-all the Soviet Union is the major threat/problem in the world, while right now the Reaganite policy on Star Wars, SALT II, etc., is a grave threat to hopes for peace. □

Query

Editors:

For a biography of Princess Catherine Dashkova (1743–1810), I would be grateful to hear from anyone who has relevant material other than the currently-available biographies, memoirs, etc., in English, French, Russian, German, and Dutch.

Guy Daniels
315 E. 86th St.
New York, N.Y. 10028 □

On the *Nation*

Editors:

The Fall 1986 issue has arrived and with it, of course, Irving Howe's article, "The Spirit of the Times," with which on most points I am in strenuous agreement. May I say, however, that it is unfair to characterize the *Nation* primarily by the articles it has from time to time published on the Hiss and Rosenberg cases?

Judicial manipulation and sheer frame-up are not, alas, confined to the Soviet bloc. The conduct of the prosecution, particularly in the Rosenberg case, was far from beyond reproach. In view of the political importance of these cases, they are bound to be perpetual matters of controversy.

I can understand Howe's general irritation with the *Nation*. Some years ago it published a review of his memoirs striking in its ignorance, lack of generosity, and stupidity. He has just expressed himself strongly on the Vidal article. However, the *Nation* consistently publishes articles on unionism and the newer social movements, on local and regional politics, on the economy, which do constitute an effort to recast our ideas. (And in Stephen Cohen, we have a student of the Soviet Union of great critical capacity.) It is true that most contributors to the *Nation* think that the organization and ideology of American empire block (or make very difficult) a new reform project at home. In that, however, are we not at one with most of *Dissent*'s authors and editors?

Perhaps I should add that although I am a member of the *Nation*'s editorial board, this letter expresses only my opinion.

Norman Birnbaum
West Berlin □

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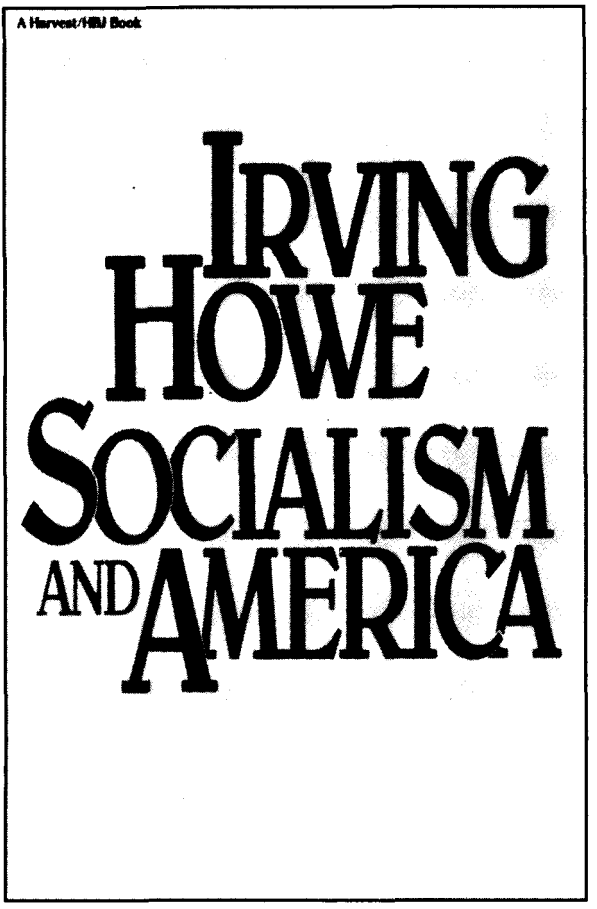

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